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Enjoy moving into the brand new D. Logan home on Wilmington's Bald Eagle Lane. **$755,000**

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Quality built by Old South Building, this brick low country architecture features a rocking chair front porch, an open floor plan with 10 ft. ceiling and spacious rooms that overlook a huge pool, fenced rear yard and Landfall's Dye golf course. **$1,099,000**

6404 Timber Creek Lane · Timber Creek

Located on the shores of Howe Creek with a private pier, this new construction home by D Logan Builders features open 1 floor living with bonus room (4th bedroom) and bath above the over-sized 2 car garage. Outdoor living? Oh yeah! Toast glorious sunset or hop on your boat from your dock, all within minutes of Wrightsville Beach and Mayfaire. **$879,000**

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8209 Bald Eagle Lane · Porter's Neck Plantation

New construction by D. Logan featuring the "Amelia" with 2900 sq. ft. of heated area including 4 bedrooms and 3 baths with an open floor plan and front and back porches. **$698,500**

841 Fox Ridge Lane · Landfall

With arched doorways, hardwood floors, 2 fireplaces and an open floor plan, this relaxing home exudes light and comfortable spaces. Inside entertaining provides a walk-in wet bar or enjoy the patio surrounded by unlimited golf and water views. **$644,400**

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June 2015

Features

43 Beach Friends
Poetry by Sandra James Snider

44 Muses of the Cape Fear
By Gwenyfar Rohler & Ashley Wahl
Nine divine forces who guide and inspire us

52 London Calling
By Mark Holmberg
Who knew? The rarest fleet of British taxis in North America, right here, in Wilmington

54 Story of a House
By Jill Gerard
Art lives in the historic J.O. Hinton House, where music is backbeat

63 Almanac
By Rosetta Fawley
Father's Day, The Summer Solstice and June's Main Man

Departments

9 Simple Life
By Jim Dodson

12 SaltWorks
The best of Wilmington

15 Front Street Spy
By Ashley Wahl

17 Saltywords
By Rich Knowles

19 Omnivorous Reader
By Brian Lampkin

23 Lunch With A Friend
By Dana Sachs

27 Great Chefs of the Cape Fear
By Jason Frye

31 Seen and Unseen
By Jennifer Chapis

35 A Novel Year
By Wiley Cash

37 Birdwatch
By Susan Campbell

39 Excursions
By Virginia Holman

64 Calendar
June happenings

70 N.C. Writer's Notebook
By Sandra Redding

73 Port City People
Out and about

77 Accidental Astrologer
By Astrid Stellanova

79 Papadaddy's Mindfield
By Clyde Edgerton

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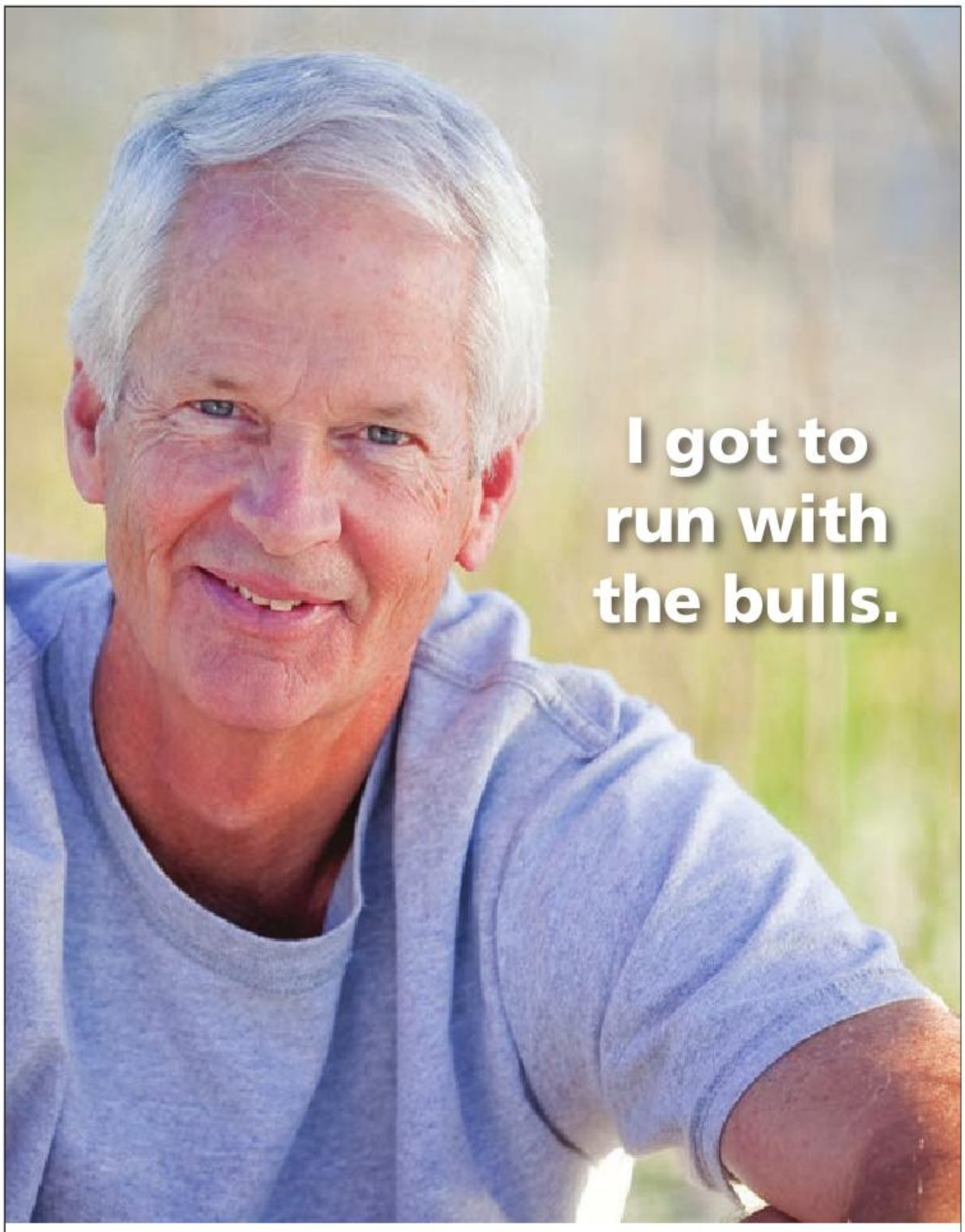

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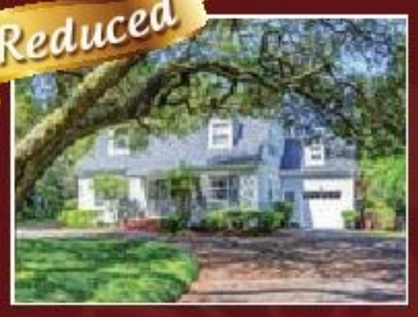

1726 Fairway Drive — *Country Club Terrace*

Classic South Oleander home in one of Wilmington's most desirable, established neighborhoods. This house sits towards the end of a tree lined, cul-de-sac and backs up to the 11th fairway of Cape Fear Country Club's golf course. Offers hardwood floors throughout both levels, a formal living room with masonry fireplace, formal dining room, a study with antique heart of pine paneling, and a large family room with wainscoting and a bay window overlooking the sloping back yard and golf course. It is within walking distance of Cape Fear Country Club and is close to New Hanover Regional Medical Center, downtown, and shopping. **$465,000**

1542 Magnolia Place — *Magnolia Place/Oleander*

This home sits at the end of an oak lined quiet cul-de-sac with side yard overlooking the 10th fairway of Cape Fear Country Club's golf course. This 3 bedroom, 3 bath home offers all formal areas plus sunroom, a cozy den and breakfast room, and a separate children's suite upstairs with bedroom, full bath and huge playroom. It is within walking distance within Cape Fear Country Club and is close to New Hanover Regional Medical Center, downtown, and shopping and dining. **$374,900**

520 South Second Street — *Downtown*

Situated uphill just 2 blocks from the Cape Fear River and within walking distance to the library, theaters, art galleries, shops, restaurants, antique stores, and more. This home was completely renovated on the inside and features heart pine floors, a large master bathroom with claw foot tub and tiled shower, a cook's dream of a kitchen, 4 fireplaces, and a security system. This property is ideal for the single person, professional couple, or "empty-nesters" who appreciate the charm of historic homes and urban lifestyle. **$319,900**

304 North Front Street, Unit 1 — *Downtown*

Experience downtown living at its best! This 1 bedroom 1 bath condo features hardwood floors, high ceilings and exposed brick walls giving it that historic district feel. This 2nd floor interior unit has all the appeal of city studio living with a nice size kitchen, appliances and high countertops to accommodate a breakfast nook or bar area. With pocket French doors for privacy between rooms and a glass block skylight window allowing natural light in, this condo is sure to be a quiet retreat away from any downtown noise. Also, conveniently located near Cape Fear Community College, the Riverwalk and downtown restaurants. Make your appointment today to experience the historic charm of downtown living! **$119,000**

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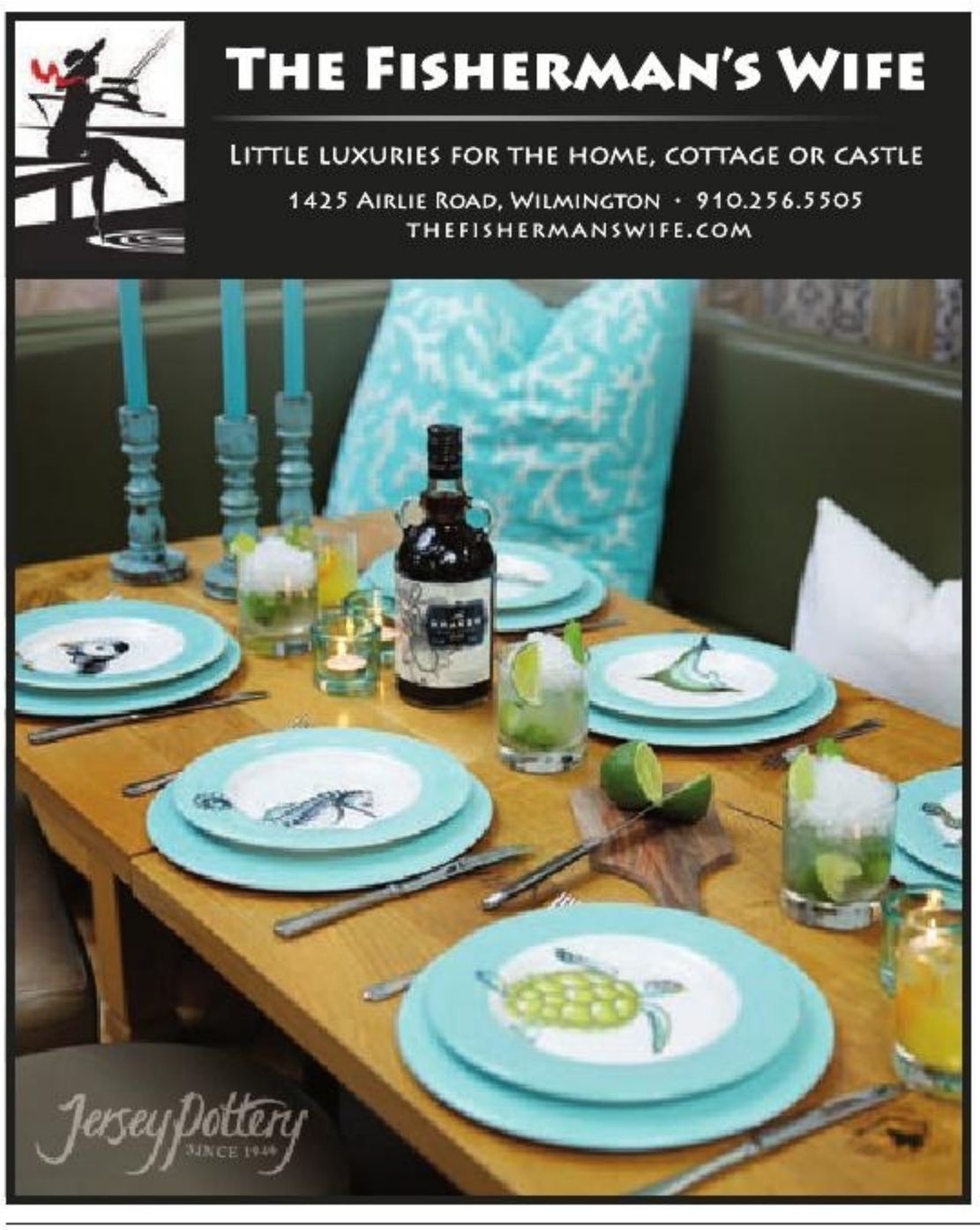
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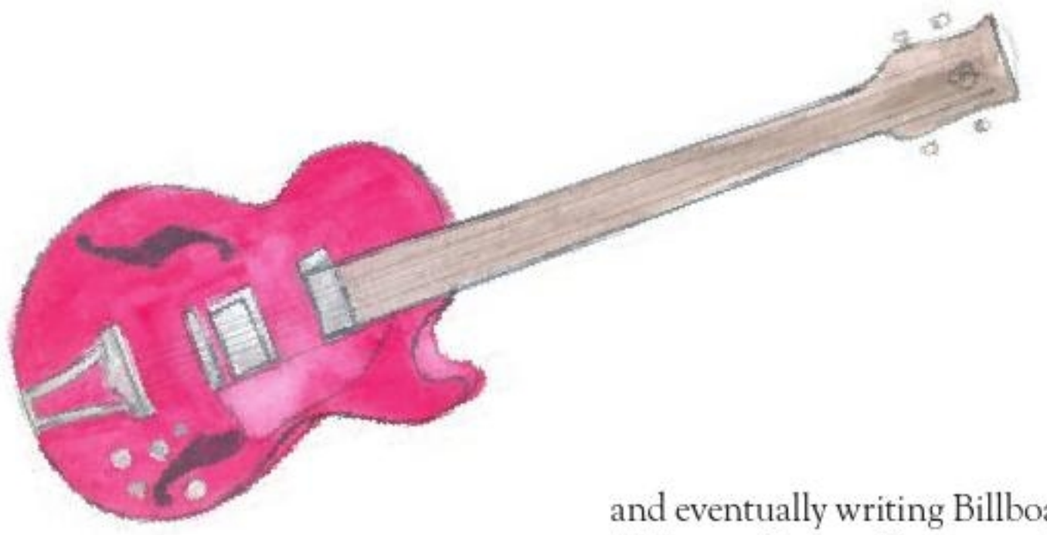

By Jim Dodson

Sometimes before dawn on summer mornings, I let in the cats from their nighttime rambles and put on the coffee, then spend a few quiet stolen moments with my beloved Ruby Jane.

To put it politely, she has a smoking-hot body that's spectacularly curved in all the right places. If you touch her the right way, she really sings.

Ruby Jane is the secondhand hollow-body electric guitar I bought myself fifteen years ago — my own version of B.B. King's famed Lucille. (May the King rest in peace.)

I bought her in memory of — well, the dream I never chased.

The evening before I found her in a secondhand shop, you see, I'd spent a couple of hours listening to and chatting with a musical hero of mine, legendary Alabama singer-songwriter Mac McAnally, whom I helped bring to the Maine Music Festival.

I first heard Mac perform at a bar in Athens, Georgia, back in the late 1970s and became an instant fan. I was the senior writer of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* Magazine and Mac was a rising star in country music who struck me as a Southern Harry Chapin, with a voice like James Taylor and a guitar-playing style that rivaled Chet Atkins. His second solo album had just been released, *No Problem Here*, still one of the finest albums ever.

After his appearance in the main performance tent in Maine twenty years later, we shared a cold beverage and talked about where our careers had gone since that night we met in an Athens bar. When he learned I played guitar, we even jammed a bit with a couple of local musicians before he packed up to be driven back to the airport.

On the way to the airport, he complimented my playing and asked me if I'd ever thought about making music a career.

I thanked him for saying this but felt sure he was just being kind to his appointed limo driver — in my case a well-traveled, mud-freckled Chevy Blazer in which he seemed right at home. I explained that I once played the guitar extensively and, as a matter of fact, came dangerously close to heading for Nashville the year I graduated from college in 1975.

"But that's another life," I said with a laugh. "The one I never chased." I admitted I rarely had time to play anymore — not with two small kids and a busy journalism career that literally took me a lot of places around the world.

As two old boys far from their native South might do, I asked him about his own musical journey.

Mac grew up in Alabama, studied classical piano and played for his Baptist church before going on to a stellar career performing on his own and eventually writing Billboard toppers for the likes of Jimmy Buffett, Alabama, Kenny Chesney and Sawyer Brown. A dozen solo albums, seven CMA Musician of the Year awards and one Grammy nomination later, he remains one the most respected songwriters and studio musicians of modern times.

"Funny how life works out down the road," he agreed.

Interestingly, this very phrase turned up in Mac's most successful song, "Down the Road," a bittersweet anthem about a father and his daughter that was nominated for a Grammy in 2010.

We turned out to have much more in common than I realized.

I told him about growing up in North Carolina, singing in the church choir and teaching myself to play a secondhand Stella Concertmaster beginning around age 10. The guitar was a gift from a man I knew only as "Blind Jack," who worked for my dad down in Mississippi at the weekly newspaper he owned for a time when I was very young.

I taught myself to play this road-worn Stella, first copying the folks songs of Peter, Paul and Mary before falling hard for the music of George Harrison and jazz greats like Chet Atkins and Wes Montgomery.

In the fifth grade I formed a band with two buddies. Our biggest gig was playing "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "Louie Louie" for Fall Festival at Archibald D. Elementary School, prompting Della Hockaday to accept a mood ring afterward, proving musicians always get the girls. Not long after this I took Della to the Greensboro Coliseum to see Paul Revere and the Raiders, Bobby Sherman and the Monkees, whose show was opened by one Jimi Hendrix.

Greensboro in those days was a major stop on the Chitlin' Circuit and East Coast live performance music circuit. Everybody who was anybody came through the Gate City. Around age 13, I even saw a UNCG student named Emmylou Harris perform somewhere down on Tate Street, and was a regular at Aycock Auditorium, where I saw road shows by B.B. King, Isaac Hayes, Ike and Tina Turner, and Cornelius Brothers and Sister Rose.

By high school I was writing songs and teaching guitar at a Greensboro music store and performing with a traditional quartet out of the Grimsley choir called the "Queensmen," performing for everything from Rotary luncheons to weddings.

In college, I found gigs playing some of my own music at a coffee house and popular restaurant on weekends. My longtime girlfriend Kristin, who was a year older and in college in the mountains, was a remarkable singer and actress who encouraged me to keep writing songs and performing.

But I was also the son of an itinerate newspaperman who had printer's ink in his blood. I worked as an editor on my college newspaper and realized I loved writing newspaper columns. At that time, Woodward and Bernstein were almost bigger rock stars than Jimi Hendrix.

ILLUSTRATION BY KIRA SCHOENFELDER

In June of 1975 — forty years ago this month — I came home to Greensboro to take my second internship at the *Greensboro Daily News* and write a bunch of new songs, figuring if I didn't follow my father into journalism I could always take a run at Nashville.

The problem was, the girl who encouraged me to chase music was murdered the previous autumn in a bungled robbery attempt of a Hickory golf club restaurant, and I couldn't shake the anger I felt at the world for doing such an unspeakable thing. I wrote a few songs and put them in a folder and soon took a job in Atlanta writing about murder and mayhem and corrupt politicians — eager to learn more about the darkness of the human soul.

During those years in the home of Bobby Jones, I quit playing golf and playing the guitar — the two things I'd loved dearly besides Kristin since childhood. One night I burned that folder of songs in the fireplace.

Looking back, the thing that saved my life was a conversation with my dad that took place on the Donald Ross porch in Pinehurst in the spring of 1983 that prompted me to politely turn down a chance to work at the *Washington Post* and accept instead a job writing about subjects I loved for a legendary magazine called *Yankee*. That eventually led me back to the world of golf. From time to time, I picked up my old Alvarez guitar (the same model Graham Nash played) and played a few old tunes just for fun. It was soothing, like being with an old friend.

That Christmas my new wife gave me a beautiful classical guitar. When our children were still small, I began playing for them. Soon they were performing in school shows and even singing on a local country music station with their old man accompanying on his guitar, singing background vocals.

That's why I was so happy with my life in Maine when my music hero Mac McAnally came calling to perform at the Maine Festival.

I'd found a simpler life that was meaningful and safe and almost as far as I could get from those dark years in Atlanta.

Naturally, I didn't tell Mac any of this.

We were just two middle-aged Southern boys far from home, chatting on the way to the airport.

The last thing he said to me as I dropped him off, though, was kind of a kick. "Better keep playing that guitar. It's like riding a bike. You never forget how. Who knows, you may wind up down in Nashville yet."

That afternoon, while waiting for my son Jack to finish his guitar lesson back in our little coastal town, I picked up a ruby-red, secondhand, hollow-body electric guitar and realized I'd always wanted a guitar just like that.

My children grew up to be splendid singers and musicians, as did my second wife, Wendy's, two sons — regular performers at our family's annual winter Solstice party when guests must all perform for their supper.

Last Christmas, Maggie, the eldest and only girl, sharply pointed out that our family had never performed together — so we gave it a shot, working up a version of a Mumford and Sons tune.

We even happily argued over what to name our new family band, settling on Maggie's wry suggestion of the Just Shut Up and Sing Band.

The crowd seemed to like the performance. Folks wondered why we hadn't performed together years ago.

My favorite Mac McAnally album is called "Simple Life." It's amazing how often I still play it — and play along with it on Ruby Jane.

A line from the title song goes: *A simple life is the life for me / a man and his wife and his family / and the Lord up above knows I'm tryin / to lead a simple life in a difficult time.*

I don't miss a life I never had. I also never thanked Mac McAnally for inspiring me to pick up the guitar again. Playing in the early morning light gives me much needed peace and pleasure. The cats at least seem to enjoy it.

That song, by the way, inspired the name of this column.

Contact editor Jim Dodson at jim@saltmagazinenc.com.

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SaltWorks

Spoonful of Sugar

Here at *Salt*, talk of Opera House Theatre Company's *Mary Poppins* got us thinking about the nannies of our own childhoods. Like the God-fearing woman whose enthusiasm for Little Debbie Swiss Rolls was matched only by her ability to skunk the children on the Nintendo 64. But we digress. This month, experience the magic — and music — of Ms. Poppins on the Main Stage at Thalian Hall, where flight by umbrella and shuffling penguins seem somehow conventional. Scrumptious sets and costumes will send you straight to Edwardian London, and when the dancing starts, you'll feel like you're seeing it through the eyes of the Banks siblings. Directed and choreographed by Jason Aycock. Performances run Wednesday, June 10, through Sunday, June 14; Friday, June 19, through Sunday, June 21; and Friday, June 26, through Sunday, June 28. Showtimes: 8 p.m. (Wednesday through Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Tickets: $29. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

Imagine All the Pieces

Last month, the Coastal Carolina Clay Guild Exhibition landed at CFCC's Wilma W. Daniels Gallery. If you've not yet seen it — an exquisite collection of hand-built sculpture, wheel thrown and utilitarian pottery — don't dawdle. A closing reception will be held on (Fourth) Friday, June 26, from 6–9 p.m. No charge. Wilma W. Daniels Gallery, CFCC, 200 Hanover Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 362-7252 or cfcc.edu/blogs/wilmagallery.

Marvelous in B minor

For one glorious week, June 7–14, the Port City Music Festival brings world class evening performances to various venues in Wilmington for a free, richly diverse summer concert series committed to making high quality music accessible to all.

Ensemble-in-residence Camerata Philadelphia will perform under the direction of conductor Stephen Framil (cellist and festival founder). Programs feature the works of Anton Arensky, Ludwig van Beethoven, Johannes Brahms, Gasper Cassadó, Ernest Chausson, Claude Debussy, Antonín Dvoák, Manuel de Falla, Gabriel Fauré, Enrique Granados, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Franz Joseph Haydn, Maurice Ravel, Clara and Robert Schumann and Joaquín Turina. Donations welcome. Info: www.portcitymusicfestival.org.

Lady Sings the Blues

This summer season, when Red Barn Studio opens its doors, a shiver will travel through the room akin to the tremble in one of the most distinctive voices of all time. Set in a seedy Philadelphia nightclub in 1959, four months before Billie Holiday's tragic death, Thalian Association's rendition of *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill* invites the audience to witness the tough choices, bad breaks, and incomparable beauty of the famed jazz singer whose style and delivery continue to haunt us. When local powerhouse LaRaisha Burnette channels Billie, Lady sings the Blues. Performances run June 11–28; 7:30 p.m. (Thursday through Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Tickets: $25. Red Barn Studio Theatre, 1122 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-1788 or www.thalian.org/redbarn.

What We're Made Of

May through September, thanks to the Jazz at the Mansion Concert Series, you can almost hear the residual hum of whatever funky, syncopated tune was last played on the Bellamy lawn. But there's nothing better than hearing the music firsthand. On Thursday, June 11, at 6:30 p.m., Stardust will perform jazz standards as the star we call "sun" slips below the horizon. Lead vocalist Laura McFayden, erstwhile pro water skier and ice skater, is something of a bright light herself. Come watch them sparkle. Tickets: $12; $10 (Bellamy and Cape Fear Jazz Society Members). Beer and wine for sale. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

Oui We Can!

Whose sticky-fingered young 'uns knew that *pain perdu* — French toast — was the tasty answer to stale bread long before Aunt Jemima's frozen version of it? Or that *pain perdu* means "lost bread"? This month, kids ages 4–9 can soak up a tasty new vocabulary at The Children's Museum's French Camp, scheduled Monday, June 15, through Friday, June 19, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Campers will learn and practice French through games and sports, dancing and singing, arts and crafts, and outdoor activities. Don't let those curious minds go stale, *s'il vous plaît*. Members: $125; $115 (sibling); non-members: $150; $135 (sibling). Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

A Round for the Children

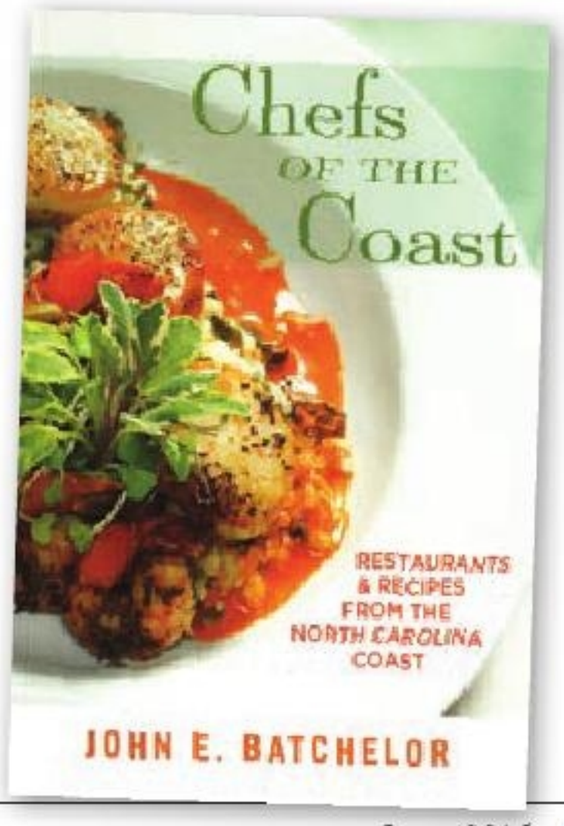
The Third Annual Future Generations Golf Tournament to benefit The First Tee of the Cape Fear Region will be held at Porters Neck Country Club on Saturday, June 13, with a shotgun start at 10 a.m. Sponsorships provide funding to support and expand The First Tee youth opportunities and programs in the Cape Fear Region, which now impact the lives of over 3,000 children between the ages of 7–17. For more information on how the game of golf serves as a platform for youth participants to learn character-building and life skills lessons — and how you can help — see website. Registration and breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Social hour, auction and dinner post-tournament. Info: www.thefirstteecapefearregion.org.

Setting the Scene

Indie film nerds: rejoice! The Cape Fear Independent Film Festival returns Thursday, June 11, through Sunday, June 14, with a smorgasbord of regionally made films and documentaries sure to satisfy your varied and adventurous taste. Take, for example, the quirky rom-com about a couple of agoraphobes who find true love via interweb (*House Arrest*). Perhaps experiencing the street musicians of Downtown Asheville through the eyes of oral historian Erin Derham (*Buskin' Blues*) is more your cuppa? Or a documentary on how the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians are fighting to preserve their native language (*First Language*). Among the collection: short films, horror flicks, and a faith and family block. And don't miss the Working Actors Discussion Panel, Writers Seminar, or the Wilmington Film Awards. Venues include Browncoat Pub & Theatre, Hannah S. Block Community Arts Center, Cape Fear Museum, TheatreNOW and Hell's Kitchen. See website for complete schedule and synopses. Info: www.cfifn.org.

Hot Spots and Hidden Treasures

John E. Batchelor, restaurant reviewer for the Greensboro *News and Record* and the *Winston-Salem Journal*, has been filling his craw with more than just Triad dishes. His new book, *Chefs of the Coast* (John F. Blair, publisher), showcases some of the best dishes and chefs found along the shores of the Old North State — some in our own backyard. Take Stephen Powell, for instance, executive chef at Jerry's on Wrightsville Avenue. Batchelor details his journey: "As a child, I loved helping her cook," Powell says of his grandmother. "On the other hand, I also grew up with a mother who had trouble boiling water. So out of necessity, I started cooking for myself, and it just progressed." In addition to capturing the flavor of each restaurant, the book also features recipes. Powell's will have you salivating before you finish reading their titles: Fried Green Tomato Tower with Fresh Mozzarella, Crispy Smoked Bacon, Green Tomato Chutney, Rosemary Honey, and Salted Pecans; (inhale) and Applewood Bacon-Wrapped Grouper with Chilled Poached Shrimp-Tomato Relish. Hungry yet? Paperback: $19.95. Info: www.blairpub.com/alltitles/chefscoast.php.



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Belle Époque

The spirit of legendary Wilmington folk artist Minnie Evans lives on in a beautiful white-and-blue dress

By Ashley Wahl

In April, sitting peacefully among flowering shrubs in a garden on Metts Avenue, Azalea Belle Renee Clauson-Rivera wasn't thinking about Facebook.

"I was admiring the garden," she recalls. All the hard work that went into it. "You'd look from the front of the house and you would never imagine what was behind it."

Same goes for Renee.

When festival-goers caught a glimpse of that gracious smile peeking out from under the lace-fringed parasol, they saw the familiar spark of a young dreamer.

This before she revealed her family tree.

"I wasn't alive when she was alive," says Renee of her great-great-grandmother, Minnie Evans, the famous Wilmington artist whose imaginative drawings were inspired by her mystical visions and the beauty of the natural world. "My connection to her is just being a part of her legacy."

On a golden afternoon at Airlie Gardens, where Minnie greeted visitors at the front gate for 27 years, Renee reflects upon her belle experience — the dress, the rules, being a part of a Wilmington tradition — as her mother, Tanya, beams.

"She didn't want to say anything (about Minnie) because she didn't want it to be all about Renee," says Tanya.

But when word got out — Renee was posing for photos at Airlie on the last day of the festival — something inside her clicked.

"It's amazing, you know, her influence," says the Laney High School senior.

She realized it was bigger than Minnie, too.

"It's hard for me to describe it."

**

"Green unicorn," said Minnie Evans, then 91, while viewing one of her paintings at St. John's Art Gallery in a 1983 film called *Angel That Stands By Me*. "He's not old enough to have wings. You have to be 1,200 years old before wings come out."

Wilmington's legendary folk artist claimed to have listened to higher guidance each time she sat down with a blank canvas.

"My whole life has been nothing but dreams," she said on the film. And when her son asked how it felt to be famous, her reply was a lot like Renee's.

"I don't know . . . I can't realize it."

**

As a soft breeze stirs the nearby oaks, Renee flashes back to her afternoon at dressmaker Debbie Scheu's house — a big moment for every future belle.

"I'd always envisioned a white lace dress," says Renee, but when Tanya pointed to a white gown embroidered with tiny blue flowers, her daughter quickly dismissed it.

"I thought it looked like a blueberry," said Renee.

Would you believe that Ms. Debbie picked out the exact same gown?

"And it fit her perfectly," Tanya says.

Renee liked the all-white dress better, but when she saw how the white-and-blue one made her mama light up, she changed her mind.

During the festival, in a hoop dress no one had chosen for three years, she felt like a fairytale princess.

"One girl curtseyed when she saw me," says Renee. "It was so sweet."

**

So, everyone wonders, can Renee draw?

Tanya will tell you that her daughter's Romare Bearden collage, completed in second grade, placed first in a New Hanover County Schools arts contest.

"I've dabbled in art," is Renee's answer.

But her dreams look different than Minnie's did.

"I want to give back to my country," says Renee, group commander of Laney's Air Force JROTC.

This fall, she'll be enrolled at Virginia Military Institute.

"I want to be a part of something bigger than myself," says Renee, which was kind of how it felt to be a Belle. "I knew that was something I had to do before graduation."

**

On the last day of the Azalea Festival, Renee posed in front of the Minnie Evans Sculpture and Bottle Chapel with her mom and grandma, also named Minnie.

"I wanted a picture underneath the Airlie Oak," says Renee, "but I was too tired."

What is it about that deeply rooted tree?

"I honestly can't tell you. But like I told my mom, if I ever get married, I want to get married right there. I've always loved that big oak tree."

That tree must have spoken to Minnie, too.

Tanya flashes a knowing smile.

"I'll let you wear the white lace dress."

Our spy, senior editor Ashley Wahl, is prone to wander.

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The Big Boy Bed

In a quest for independence, the hardest journey is from the crib to the first bed

By Rich Knowles

My son's first birthday party was over. The cake and guests were gone, and the piñata hung, disemboweled, from a tree. In the living room, the dollar-store balloons had already lost most of their helium and now drifted eye-level, shrunken and creepy, shuffling through the house like drunken tourists.

Jack was our first child, and like a lot of new parents we were in some ego-driven race to have him not only achieve milestones, but crush them, in record time, and with a flair never before witnessed until our little Wonderbaby hit the scene. According to the experts, the next leap in Jack's independence was the transition from crib to bed, so that's how and why we found ourselves — mere hours after our son blew out the candle — feverishly dismantling his crib.

He watched us from the doorway, pointing to the growing pile of wood that had, until very recently, been his refuge, his safe place. We explained that a crib was for babies, and now that he was a big boy, he was ready for his very own big boy bed. He laughed and drummed his belly, but that was the extent of his response, which I took as a good sign because geniuses usually hate change.

It would be a couple of days before we could swing a family trek to the furniture store, so until then, we would defy the experts and let the little guy crash with us. It'll be sweet, we thought. His warm, tan little body nestled between us, his breath soft on the pillow. We could kiss him all we wanted and he would be oblivious, deep in his dreams. It was only for a few nights, after all. Three, tops.

Looking back, I can't pinpoint exactly when my strategy went into the Diaper Genie. We bought him a bed as planned — with a mattress that cost more than ours — along with the whole set-up, down to flannel Elmo sheets. Elmo sheets, man! And he loved that bed. Loved dancing on it, loved playing on it, loved playing under it. He just wouldn't sleep in it. Flat-out refused. He was twenty pounds of hell-no, dead set on staying in Mommy and Daddy's bed forever. It was our first battle of wills, and he was winning. For two months now he was our bedmate, sleep-stealer and pillow hog. My midnight groin kicker.

It was all our fault. We had been lazy, complacent. Weak. It was time to step up and be The Parents. Time to retake our bed and dictate the balance of power for the next seventeen years. We had prepared for this moment (some would say over-prepared) and were awash in the arrogance of the uninitiated. There would be no begging, bribing or cajoling. Those were the tactics of the old-school parent. We were educated members of the new class. We had a plan.

That night, we gave him his bath and dried him off, his damp hair smelling like Johnson's Baby Shampoo (best smell ever). We all climbed into bed for story time. He snuggled down in his usual spot between us, took a few nips from the bottle, and soon was sound asleep. We watched him for a while, lying there, our little boy, safe from the world. My wife lightly brushed his hair away from his forehead, stroked his soft cheek, while I traced the outline of his perfect little ear. We were so in love with him.

"He's amazing, isn't he?" my wife said.

I agreed, and we smiled at each other. One of those moments, genuine and spontaneous and, like childhood, all too fleeting.

I wanted him to stay with us. A glance at my wife confirmed she had the same idea. If only one of us had been there, Jack would've slept the night in our bed, but because we were both there, fresh off a discussion about parental discipline, we didn't give voice to that wish and instead went forward with the move.

I slid out of bed like a fried egg, careful not to disturb the covers or bump the mattress. I gently picked up my son and held him to me as my wife led the way to clear any potential obstacles. We made it to his room without incident, where the lights were dimmed and the covers pulled back. We held our breath as I set him among the Elmos and my wife pulled the sheets to his chin. He made a sweet little noise and turned on his side, asleep and content. Asleep and content.

Back in our bed, I turned off the lamp and kissed my wife goodnight. She works harder than I do, and after a few minutes of not talking about what we had done, her breath became even and deep as she gave in to sleep. In the dark, listening to my wife breathe, I thought about what it meant to be a parent, how letting your child go, even in the tiniest of ways, is the right thing to do but also the hardest, and how tonight was just the first of many painful nights we would watch and help our son become a big boy, and someday, sooner than we could ever imagine, a man.

I don't know how long I'd been asleep when I felt the soft taps on my arm. I turned to see a little person standing in the dark by my bed. He whispered one word: "Daddy." I reached over and picked him up and held him to me, hoping he didn't notice I had started crying. He immediately took half my pillow and dug his knees into my hip. Within seconds, he was asleep. My wife, silent through the whole thing, reached over and squeezed my hand.

Wilmington native Rich Knowles is a novelist, screenwriter and father of three. His third novel, The Hedonist, *is forthcoming.*

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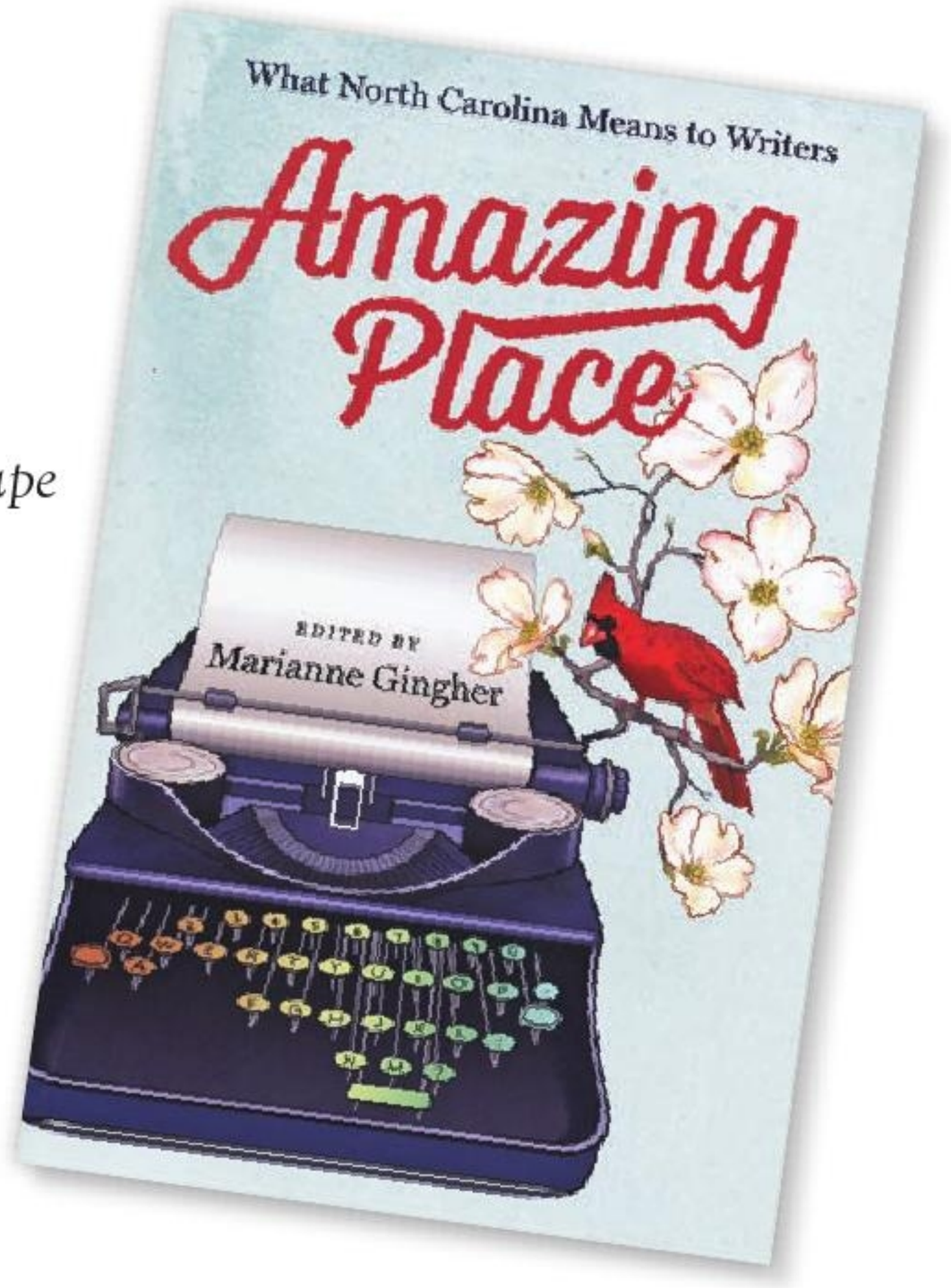
Just Enough Different

Voices from North Carolina's literary landscape



By Brian Lampkin

I am weary of any argument made for the idea of an exceptional place. On the geopolitical scale, we see the folly of so-called "American exceptionalism," which basically argues that our place is better than yours because we say so — and because we ignore anything dreadful about American history that would contradict our rosy view of ourselves. Don't even get me started on the idea of exceptional children.

I'm not inclined to favor the premise of Marianne Gingher's *Amazing Place: What North Carolina Means to Writers* (UNCPress, 2015. $20). I tend to think that the North Carolina mountains, while lovely, aren't all that much different from the Tennessee or Kentucky mountains. My favorite place in North Carolina — the Great Dismal Swamp — cares not at all about an imaginary border separating the good people of the Old North State from the slightly less good people of the Old Dominion. Poet Gary Snyder has always argued against thinking of state boundaries as meaningful; we are less united by statehood than we are by the ecological factors of our existence, i.e. desert dwelling Arizonians have much more in common with Barstow Californians than Barstowians have with San Franciscans.

So just as I'm ready for a good argument with this book, the book refuses to argue back. First off, editor Marianne Gingher recognizes that writers are primarily influenced by physical surroundings, and not so much by dotted lines on a map. She separates the various essays into three sections: "The Mountains," "The Piedmont" and "Down East and the Coast," and nearly all the writers collected focus on specifics of the natural environment surrounding them — or on the specific people in those environments who helped them become writers.

Michael Parker begins his essay, "A Man Came Up from Wilmington, Carrying a Bag of Snakes," with this observation: "When people in other parts of the country ask me why so many writers come from North Carolina I am always tempted to tell them that, proportionally, there are just as many people with messed up psyches in North Carolina as there are in New Hampshire, County Cork or Calcutta." And many other essays similarly make no claim for North Carolina's outsized sense of literary self.

But every place is specifically unique; every place has its own language and flora and fauna and writers must be attentive to what makes their place in the world amazing unlike all the other amazing places. It's not a matter of North Carolina being an unusually fertile environment for writers. It is a matter of North Carolina writers making exceptional use of what is uniquely wonderful about this particular place. In Parker's essay, he focuses on the storytelling sound of North Carolina. His ear is tuned to the rhythms and scale of how Eastern North Carolinians tell stories, and, remarkably, he uses the facts of physical landscape as an explanation of the digressive nature of those stories and of his writing:

"If you can't get there from here — if the bridge is twenty miles north, if no one bothered to drain the swamp so they could put a road through it — it's no wonder that your prose is occasionally described as orbicular, if not convoluted. My prose is often riddled with asides . . . because my sentences attempt to mimic their attempts to get to work on time in a terrain given to detour, if not dead end."

Fred Chappell's essay, "100," also zeroes in on the specifics of language, offering a few examples of how our disparate landscapes have their special ways with words (let me shout out for Walt Wolfram and Jeffrey Reaser's book *Talkin' Tar Heel* for an in-depth study of the various N.C. idioms), but most interestingly, Chappell tells of his need to keep his own voice alive. Chappell was once confronted by a colleague about, "Why do you say those hick things? You say 'ain't' and the department head 'don't know what he is doing' and 'brung up ignorant' and all that. It just sounds dumb. You would probably say, 'mighty dumb.'" Chappell answers the somewhat belligerent question by saying that he speaks "in that manner to keep dialogue patterns secure in aural memory." As a writer, Chappell is trying to keep the specific sounds of his North Carolina roots. He's like the last of the Chickasaw speakers desperately trying to hear the language survive into the 21st Century. But Chappell is rarely so high-minded, or rather, he's too self-deprecating to make such a claim; he chalks it up to his simple

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"orneriness" and "an odd feeling of pride."

So Parker and Chappell are making no claim for an "amazing place" other than their place in the world, no matter how denigrated, is amazing. And most of the other writers in the book say similar things, if not about physical landscape or language, then about particular people in North Carolina who made them the writers they are today. In "Fertile North Carolina," Robert Morgan offers an explanation for the perceived notion of an odd plethora of literary Tar Heels: Thomas Wolfe. "Once Wolfe," Morgan writes, "became such a celebrated writer and international celebrity . . . it was inevitable that the talented youth of North Carolina would think of following his career path." Undoubtedly true, but surely also true for Faulkner's Mississippi, or Cather's Nebraska, or, for that matter, Atwood's Canada or Márquez's Colombia.

We do need people to show us the way, to make clear that there is art in one's hometown no matter where one comes from. (At a recent talk by Rocky Mount's Allan Gurganus, several young people in the audience from Rocky Mount said that they didn't know they could find a life in art until they discovered that the famous Gurganus was also from their humble town.) Teachers provide a different example, and many of these essays, including Morgan's, talk about the value of certain teachers or academic institutions.

Haters of Chapel Hill should avoid "The Piedmont" section of *Amazing Place* because both the town and UNC in particular are given serious respect. Lee Smith, Lydia Millet, Jenny Offill, Stephanie Elizondo Griest and others talk of their years in Chapel Hill with joy and, at times, complicated gratitude. Get over your petty grievances and enjoy the essays — but if grievance is more suited to your personality, then I recommend Rosecrans Baldwin's "Diary, 2008–2013," which begins, "1. Right around the time everything went to shit."

Amazing Place could certainly use more African American and other voices of color, but I say that with full knowledge that no anthology ever created has not been subject to overheated complaint about what is missing. Editor Gingher has put together a collection of writers any state would be proud of, and Gingher herself, in an excellent essay on Greensboro, "The Capitol of Normal," knows that we're no different than anywhere else — except in all the ways that we are: "Greensboro, North Carolina: a place of harmony, unrest, heartbreak, longing, boredom, hypocrisy, kindness, injustice, saints, blowhards, noisemakers, creators and destroyers, givers, takers, peacemakers, agitators, philanthropists, do-gooders, the homegrown and the homeless, visionaries, fools, and dreamers — same as any place, and just enough different, too."

Brian Lampkin is an owner of Greensboro's Scuppernong Books.

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Crêpes and More

Talking of healing and community and the true spirit of Islam

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES STEFIUK

By Dana Sachs

When Nada Merghani began her freshman year at UNCW last fall, she looked up the university's Muslim Student Association page on Facebook. As one of a small group of Muslims at the university, she knew that these students had to support one another, so she wrote a message to the person listed as president. "What's going on with the MSA?"

The former president wrote back with disappointing news. "There isn't an MSA," she said. The group had ceased to function.

Nada was shocked. "I've lived my life wanting one thing — Ummah," which means "community" in Arabic. "I couldn't believe they didn't have that." Even though she'd just arrived on campus, she decided to try to revive the MSA. After securing financial support from mosques around North Carolina, she arranged a joyful October celebration of the festival of Eid al-Adha, which commemorates Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, Ishmael (and, yes, the similarities between Jewish, Christian and Islamic holy stories are pretty fascinating). These days, UNCW's MSA is a thriving student-run organization, though Nada refuses to take credit for its success.

"It was the energy of the entire group," she told me. "I wouldn't say that they were waiting just for me."

When you learn about Nada's background, it starts to make sense that, even as a first-semester freshman, she wasn't daunted by her new surroundings. She was born in Omdurman, Sudan, a large city on the Western banks of the Nile River, but her father's medical studies took the family all over the world before they settled permanently in Rockingham, North Carolina, in 2006. Nada spent her middle and high school years there before leaving for college. These days, her manner and style seem to perfectly synthesize her life experiences. She wears a traditional headscarf (nicely coordinated, on the day we met, with the purples in her sweater), converses easily in Arabic, and speaks English with the lilting cadence of a Tarheel.

Nada's friends in the MSA recommended that she and I meet for lunch at Our Crêpes and More, a simple breakfast-and-lunch spot in a strip mall on Oleander. Despite its homely location, the restaurant has developed a reputation for evoking the flavors and ambience of France, partly because everything is homemade and preservative-free, and partly because the owner is from Switzerland and her son-in-law from the South of France. In other words, they know what they're doing.

We tried three savory crepes: the St. Malo, the Quebec, and the Tahiti. The St. Malo included roast turkey, fresh tomato, red onion and spinach leaves tucked inside the crepe, topped with slightly spicy remoulade sauce and a dollop of salted whipped cream. (If you think that salted whipped cream sounds yucky, reserve judgment until you've tasted it.) The Quebec puts a French spin on the familiar bagel toppings of smoked salmon, cream cheese, and capers by substituting sour cream for the cream cheese, which make it seem lighter but taste more luscious. The Tahiti — a sweet and salty combination of chicken curry, pineapple, raisins and almonds — stole Nada's heart because of its "delicate spices and incredible blend of French and Indian cultures."

Although Nada shows a typical college student's interest in the here and now — "I love this song!" she squealed when she heard a familiar tune on the restaurant's sound system — it's her belief in God that most profoundly inspires her. "As our prophet Muhammad said, 'Every act of goodness is a charity,'" she told me. "I live by that."

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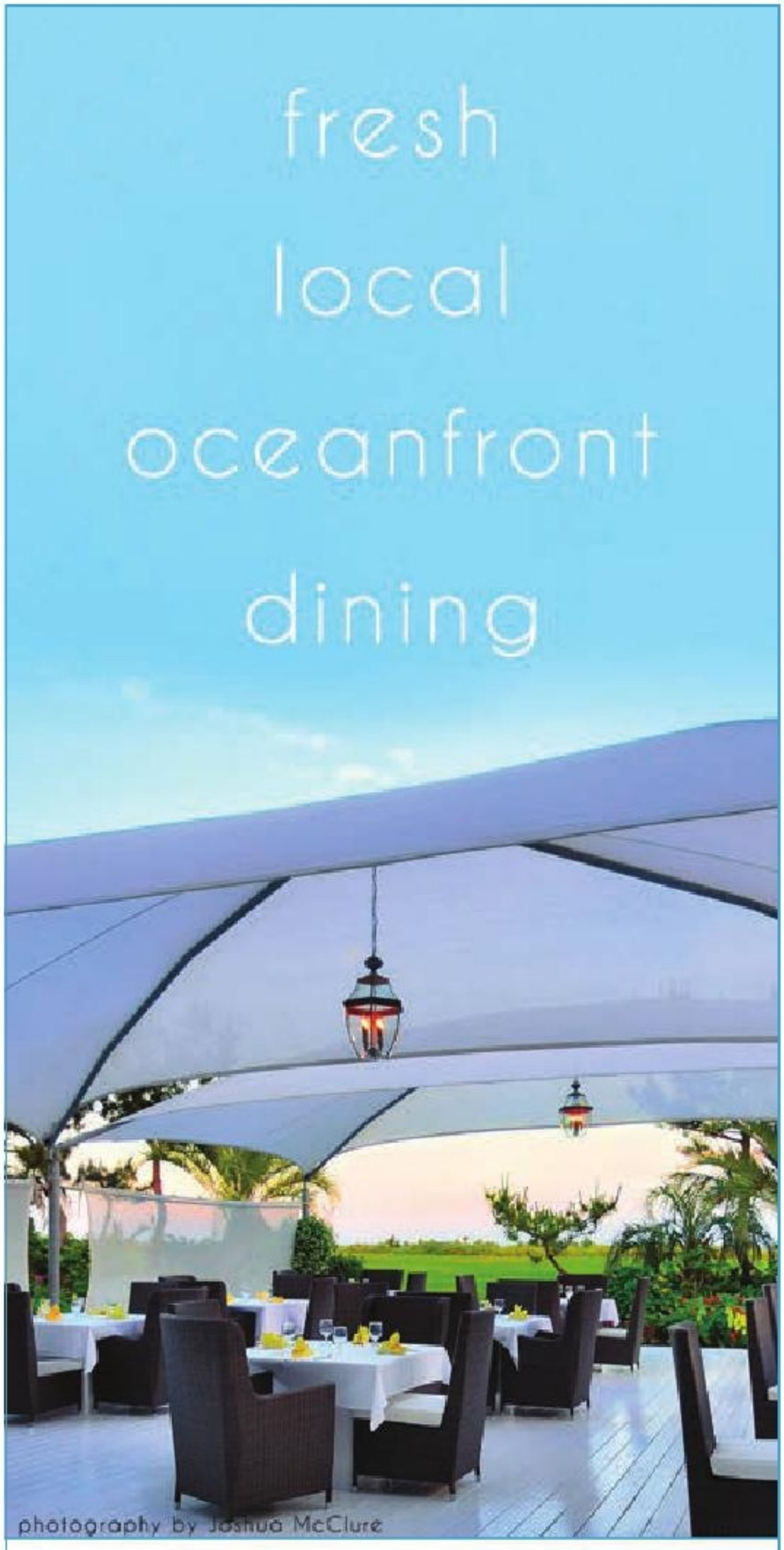

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LUNCH WITH A FRIEND

This commitment to others may explain how the MSA became an integral part of UNCW's response to unbearable tragedy this past spring. In February, three Muslim students – a young married couple and the wife's sister – were murdered in Chapel Hill. That event led UNCW administrators to ask the MSA to participate in a campus-wide "Night of Remembrance." Nada described the tears that people shed that evening as "healing tears," but she emphasized, too, that the suffering continues.

"We can do everything," she told me, "and it's not enough. A father went from having three children to having one." Only faith in God, and belief in the afterlife, offered solace. "I feel so much sadness, but happiness, too," she said, "because so many amazing things await [the slain students] in the next life. If [their murderer] had known how much happiness they would experi-

ence, he wouldn't have killed them."

The murders in Chapel Hill (for which an alleged atheist, Craig Stephen Hicks, has been arrested) underscore the fact that violent extremists do not come from any single community or religion. As a Muslim, though, Nada often has to distance herself from the Islamic terrorists who dominate the headlines and try to speak for her faith. "ISIS is not even Islam," she told me, referring to the group that calls itself the Islamic State. She pulled out her phone. "Look at this." She clicked on a photo of ISIS fighters in prayer. Traditional Muslims pray by facing toward the holy site of Mecca, but these ISIS fighters knelt in random directions, completely counter to a basic tenet of the religion. "They can claim whatever they want," she said, "but it's not Islam." At the same time, she's quick to acknowledge that the religion has produced extremists. Unlike ISIS, "al-Qaeda and the Taliban are Islamic," Nada said. "I get that. They are my responsibility. I have to stop them."

Mainstream Muslims, like Nada, set themselves apart from violent fundamentalists by making it clear that, in their world view, Ummah includes Muslims and non-Muslims together, living in peace. "If you want to be Muslim, Jewish, Christian, atheist," she said, "that's your right. No one has a right to take that away from you. That's how you understand your place in the universe."

We had reached the most important moment of a meal at a crêperie: dessert. We paused to try the weekly sweet special, a chocolate crepe with bananas, strawberries and cream cheese filling; and the New Orleans, an apple pie-style crepe covered with cookie crumble, glazed walnuts, and topped with vanilla ice cream and caramel syrup. The contrast between our conversation and the sweet delicacies in front of us made Nada laugh.

"Ice cream and terrorism," she mused, but she was still thinking about finding ways for human beings to get along. "If there was a religion called 'Our Lord and Savior the Apple Pie,' I would support them, and if you can't see the beauty in that, you're not looking hard enough."

Our Crêpes and More, 3810 Oleander Drive, is open for breakfast, lunch or brunch every day except for Mondays. For hours or other information, call (910) 395-0077 or visit www.ourcrepesandmore.com. If you're interested in finding out more about UNCW's Muslim Student Association, you can visit their page on Facebook.

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The power of 'clean' food with a touch of salt

PHOTOGRAPH (LEFT) BY JAMES STEFIUK. PHOTOGRAPH (RIGHT) BY FOCUS ON THE COAST/PHOTOGRAPHER JASON ARMOND

By Jason Frye

"Salt. I think it's the most underrated," says chef Shawn Wellersdick. "But salt's funny because it's the one ingredient that I think is underappreciated, over- and underutilized, and the most misused."

Wellersdick and I are sitting in the dining room of his Lumina Station restaurant, Port Land Grille. It's mid-morning, so he's not in his chef's whites yet, but our conversation has him excited. He talks as fast as I can take notes.

"But if you use it right — a little as you go, tasting as you cook, adjusting where you need to adjust — you don't need it." He gestures at the table, or, more properly, at what's not on the table. There's no salt shaker to be found.

"Too many cooks treat it like a main ingredient, but it's a flavor enhancer, a catalyst, and using it is about subtlety. When I serve a steak, I want you to taste the meat and the char, not focus on the complex minerality of the salt in each bite; that stuff's for the trendy chefs who are hiding behind a flashy technique or the spice of the minute."

Wellersdick isn't one to follow a trend, though if food bloggers were a thing in 2000 when Port Land Grille opened its doors, they'd have seen him as a trend-setter in the eastward migration of California cuisine. Today we'd call it Farm to Table or Slow Food or Farm to Fork. Wellersdick calls it "Clean Food" and insists it's not a trend, but simply the way chefs should cook. He defines it as "tasting what you ordered; not too fussy, not too fancy, just fine food."

"The way I cook and the way I like to eat, it's about simplicity. I don't want to meddle too much or muddy up the flavors. I don't want to lose the focus of the dish. I want the ingredients to have a voice, and I want you to hear that voice."

With the arrival of spring, that voice gets a little louder, and it increases to a roar throughout summer, when stalls at the farmers markets are overflowing with produce that was on the vine just a day or two before. As the seasons change, so do the flavors and ingredients available to chefs and cooks. This evolution from the heavy stews and roasts of winter to lighter spring fare and the bold, fresh flavors of summer intrigues Wellersdick. For him, change and transition have been steady themes for the last few years.

"I call it my evolution of focus," he says. "I'm trying to leave a positive impression on this world."

To do that, to be a catalyst in his world, Wellersdick had to make changes. They started, as great change often does, with events beyond our control. In his case, it was the economic downturn of 2008.

"We saw business drop. So many people we knew — clients and friends — lost businesses and had homes foreclosed on. We had to evaluate Port Land Grille and see how we could keep our business open, not just for us, but for them. They needed a place to go where all the bad stuff out there wasn't so ever-present."

They introduced a new menu designed to reflect the current state of the nation's pocketbook, but one that didn't skimp on quality of food or service. It worked, and Port Land Grille survived the downturn by staying true to their food philosophy and sticking with their loyal diners.

Then, four years ago, Wellersdick's mother passed. "Too young," he said. "Too sudden." And that prompted another shift in his outlook, one that spoke of generosity and good will.

Then, a couple of Christmases back, he was struggling with his weight and was watching his son do the same.

"I'd led an unhealthy lifestyle as a result of the job. Too much tasting every shift, and too many late-night dinners and glasses of wine had taken their toll. I was unhappy with my weight and health, and I was watching my teenage son having some of the same struggles, so I decided to make a change."

The change was tri-part. First, he began to practice what he was preaching to his son — "lead by example, right?" — then he bought them the Christmas gift of a gym membership and a trainer. Then he discovered running and became

involved in Without Limits, a group of runners and running coaches in Wilmington.

"I run fifty to sixty miles a week," he says. "If you had told me when I started running that I'd hit these miles, I'd have called you crazy. I mean, that first 5k you run, you just ask yourself, 'Can I really do this?' Then you do it and it's time for another one and you do that one too."

Since joining the group and launching his "hobby running career," he's seen changes in his physical self—dropping weight and tightening up—and his mental self—he's toughened up, running a pair of half-Ironmans and a full in addition to road races. It's rippled out to Port Land Grille. As a result of his new philosophy, he says the relationship he has with his kitchen and front of house is better than ever, and as a result of that, the food is better than it's ever been.

Strawberry and Spinach Salad

Local strawberry and baby spinach salad with lump crab, caramelized Vidalia onions, goat cheese, avocado and toasted pine nuts with a local wildflower honey Dijon tarragon vinaigrette

Baby spinach leaves, 1 packed cup per*
Fresh strawberries, sliced, 4–6 per* (reserve some extra for garnish)
Ripe avocado, diced, 2 Tbs per * (reserve extra for garnish)
Vidalia onion, caramelized slices, 2 Tbs per*
Fresh lump crab meat, 1 oz per*
Goat cheese, crumbled, 1 oz per*
Toasted pine nuts, 1 Tbs per*

**per serving – can easily be multiplied and adjusted to taste or availability.*

Lightly toss spinach, strawberries, avocado, onions and crab with about 2–3 Tbs dressing per serving and mound approximately one cup of salad on each plate. Top with goat cheese and pine nuts on greens and garnish plate with a few bits of strawberry and avocado around greens. Drizzle with additional dressing as desired.

Wildflower Honey Dijon Tarragon Vinaigrette

1/4 cup honey
2 tbs Dijon mustard
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
2.5 oz Champagne vinegar
2 oz (2 Tbs) fresh tarragon leaves, minced
One shallot, minced
Zest and juice of one lemon
Salt and pepper
Whisk together. Makes about 1 1/2 cups

Jason Frye is a travel writer and author of Moon North Carolina *and* Moon NC Coast. *He's a barbecue judge, he rarely naps, and he's always on the road. Keep up with his travels at tarheeltourist.com.*

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The Iceberg Inside

I wanted a communicative partner, but first I needed to look within

By Jennifer Chapis

It happened in an instant. I fell in love with my husband at a bar called Liquids in New York's East Village. He was reading a story he'd written about two characters who admired one another yet barely spoke.

One moment, I knew Josh as emotionally detached. Then, an unexpected light shone through his crafted sentences, and I witnessed the mammoth intensity beneath the surface of his composed presentation. His insights exposed a distinct sensitivity, and nothing was sexier to me than emotional depth.

Josh was my best friend from graduate school, and the most talented writer I knew. He was my favorite colleague, who cracked absurd jokes during our high-pressure faculty meetings. I found him adorable, too. Yet, I hadn't considered dating him. Why? Because he was so private. He reminded me of an enchanting iceberg — only the tip visible. Most of him lay unseen below the surface.

I had always wanted a partner who let me know who he really was. Chuck, an early boyfriend, famous among friends for getting naked at our college parties, had taken every opportunity to bare himself, sometimes going too far. I remember him getting punched when — buck naked, of course — Chuck jumped on a guy's back.

"Sorry, dude," he said after, completely sincerely. "I just love you."

Chuck was expressive. It wasn't uncommon for him to spend thousands to whisk me away to Mexico. But it was also normal for him to park on the sidewalk, tickets spilling from the glove box. His few boundaries unfortunately extended to alcohol as well, which resulted in our breakup. But I admired his emotional fearlessness. Crying, he admitted to feeling that he didn't deserve me. I never once wondered what he was thinking.

Later, I wanted a man who was a responsible adult. Josh barely drank. He'd never avoid paying a parking ticket. But, he often avoided his feelings. When I returned after six weeks away, leading workshops in London, I rushed to tell him I missed him. Josh said nothing back.

This sort of disengagement was familiar. As a child, it'd bothered me when my father arrived home after work, walked past my mother, and flipped on the television. Although he cherished her, sometimes even bringing her roses, he preferred watching reruns of Captain Kirk's interstellar battles to talking about his day here on earth. My mother's loneliness was palpable.

Sometimes we grow by going deeper into our frustration. Marrying Josh, I chose a man less expressive than my father. Josh shared few details from his childhood and rarely told stories about his extensive travels. He wanted me by his side, but did not want to talk much. I disliked television, but often ate dinner TV-side, to be closer to him. Everyone knew he was crazy about me, but me.

"How can you tell?" I asked my mom.

"It's obvious," she said, but couldn't articulate how she knew.

Josh wasn't cold. He told me he loved me; he just never said why. When he wanted to be more expressive, he added more exclamation points to his text messages: "I love you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" I didn't understand how he could write moving fiction, but couldn't write me a love letter.

Even after being married for years, I still wondered how he felt about im-

portant events in our lives. When his father had quintuple bypass surgery, Josh spent the day in bed, under his blanket.

"I'm fine," he said.

Later, at 35, Josh was diagnosed with stage IV melanoma. There was a possibility he may not survive. I needed him to talk to me.

"How's Josh doing?" people asked.

"I wish I knew," I said, holding back tears.

I remember walking on the surface of an iceberg on an Alaskan tour. "About 90 percent is underwater," the guide said. "Have you ever seen an iceberg flip over?"

Sometimes when a big enough piece breaks away, the bottom comes rushing to the top. I just kept waiting for that to happen with Josh.

Like the moment I fell in love, the end of our marriage happened in an instant.

Josh's health had miraculously returned. We were watching a movie on the couch, in silence as usual. Without premonition, I heard myself say, "I can't do this anymore." While it broke my heart, after twelve years I stopped trying.

I fled to India, as many searching souls do. I sat cross-legged six hours a day in meditation. Deep inside myself, free from my desire for him to change, the truth emerged. The truth is Josh loved me completely, in the way he knew how. The truth is I sometimes didn't feel loved. The truth is he was not responsible for that. Asking Josh to be like me was like expecting a cat to bark. It was unrealistic.

At our wedding, Josh's family had delivered demonstrative speeches. Instead of raising a toast, my father held me tenderly during our father-daughter dance. I felt his chest heaving as he cried before our ninety guests. Everyone knew how much he loved me. Especially me. A speech wasn't necessary.

Alone in silence in an Indian ashram, it became effortless to allow Josh and I to each be as we are. I saw us both flowing forward, naturally, like two water droplets in the Ganges — impossible to separate. In that higher state of consciousness, I knew no disparity between us, despite our different emotional registers.

Love is different things to different people. To me, love meant opening my heart, sharing fears, confusions, and excitements — so we can better understand ourselves and one another.

Compared to Josh, I was open. But I'd been hiding out, too. I had kept my resentment in, offering only part of what I was feeling. It was easy for me to express love, but difficult to express anger. I never told him how pissed off I was for shutting me out. I was afraid he wouldn't listen, and then I'd really feel rejected.

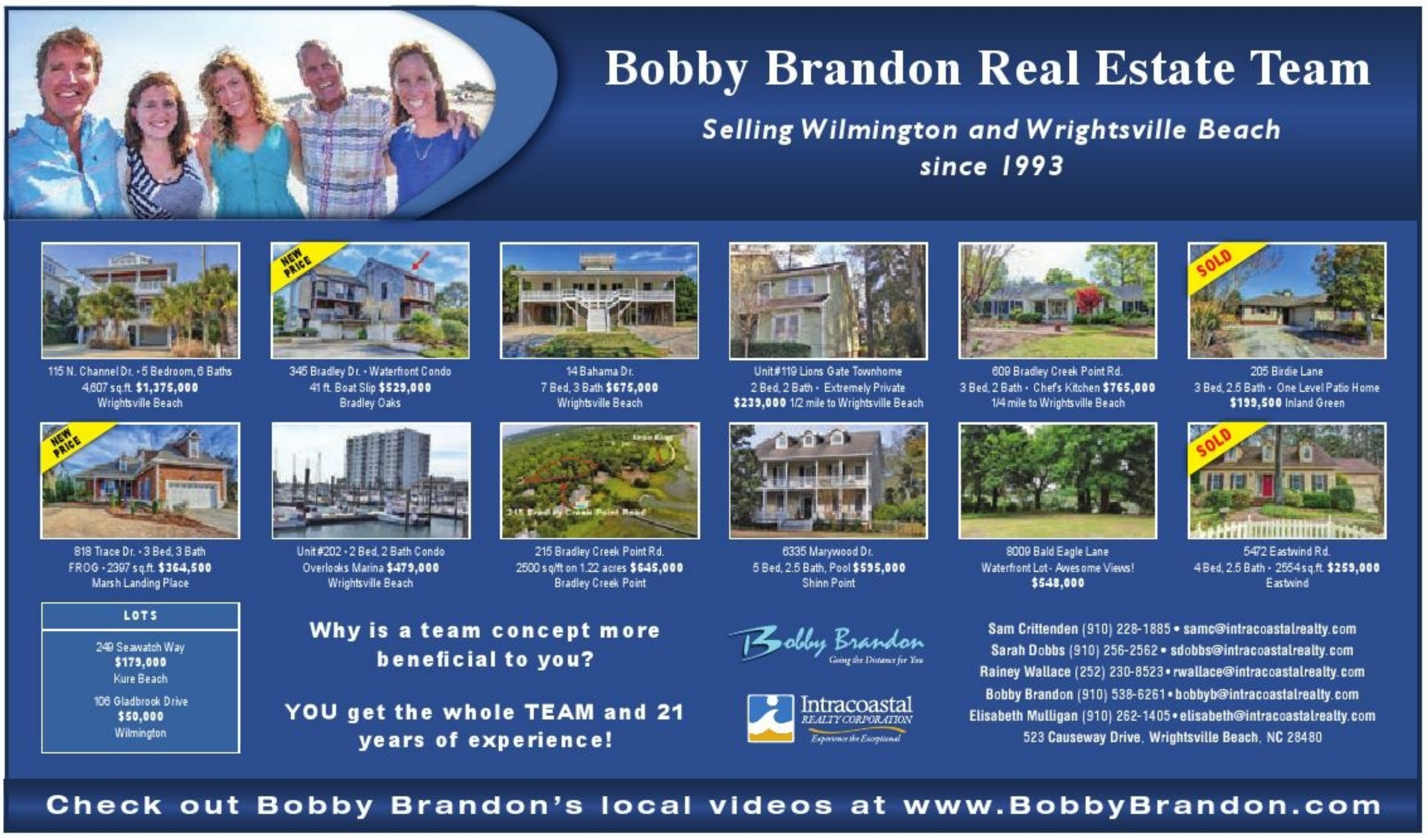
Accepting that he is one way and I am another helped me become responsible for fulfilling my own needs. Meditation helped me shelf my ego long enough to own the fact that I also needed to be more communicative. Moreover, I needed a communicative partner, something I'd known since childhood but hadn't honored. I was finally able to be with what is, without blaming either of us.

Until we reveal the content of our hearts to ourselves, we cannot be met by another person. We are all icebergs until we see what's inside.

Like my father, who was too emotional to speak at my wedding, I had intuitively sensed that Josh said so little because he felt so much.

The night I'd fallen in love with him, the bar was so dark I could see nothing but his sweet eyes and strong jawline lit by the spotlight. His art flipped the iceberg. Listening to him read his fiction, I sat silently amongst the crowd, and felt alone with him. Both of us altogether visible.

Jennifer Chapis is an energy healer practicing in Wilmington. She leads workshops in meditation and Writing for Healing ™. Find her at: Jennifer@AllLoveHealing.com.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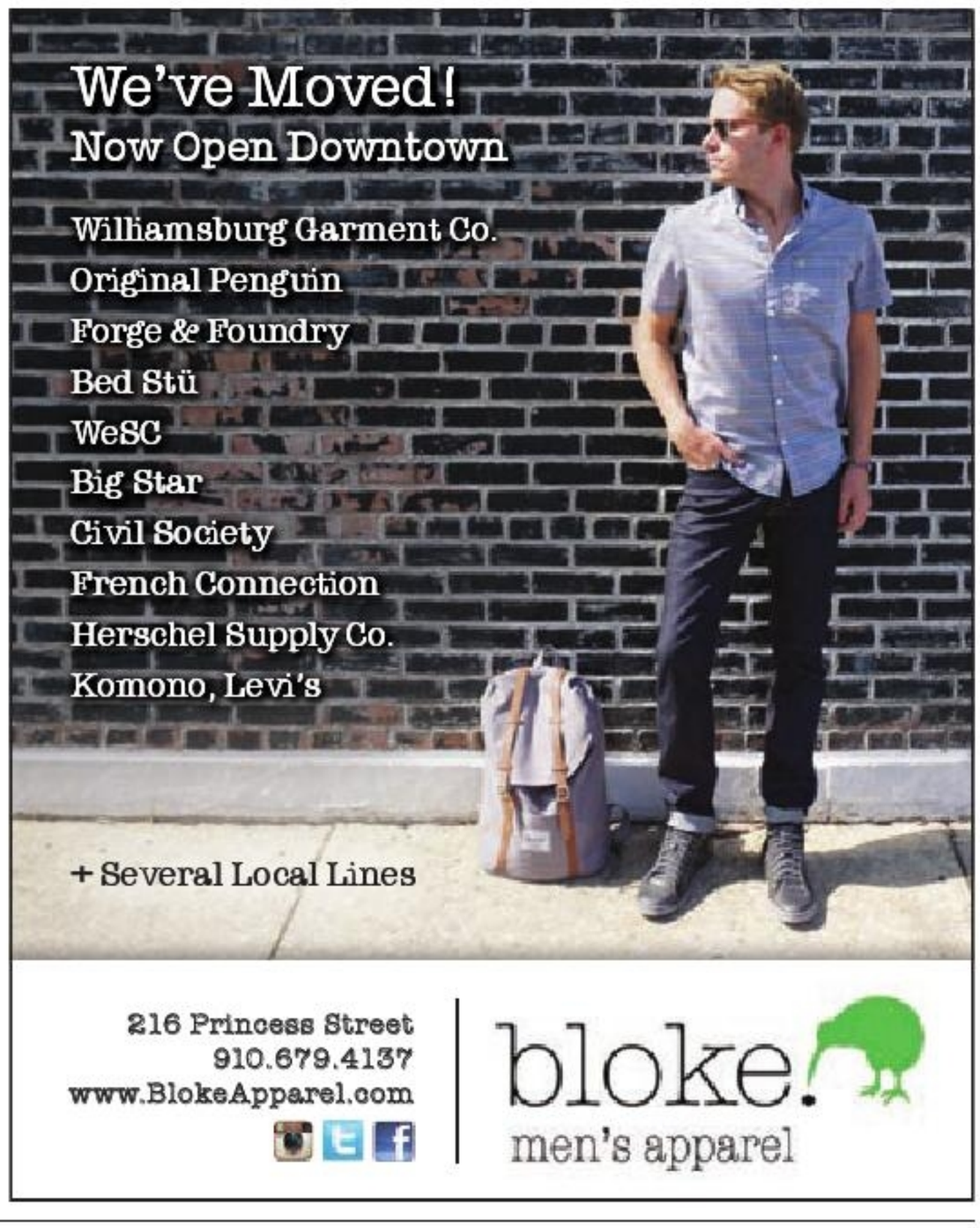
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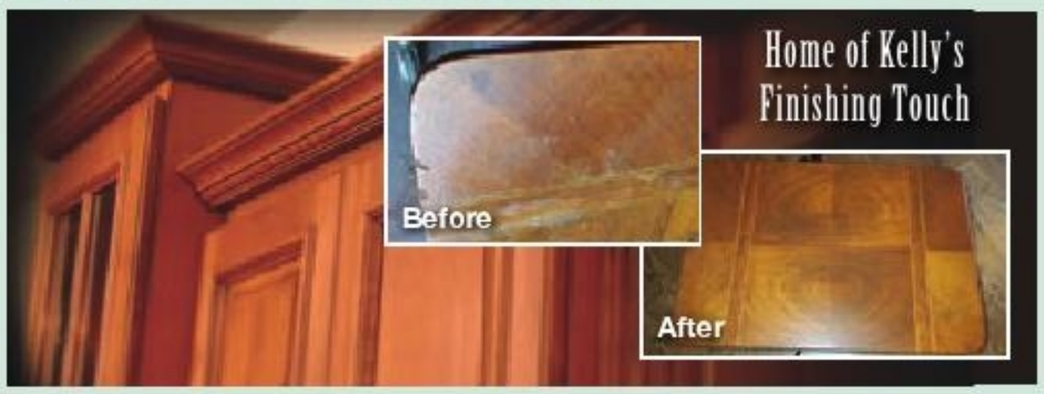

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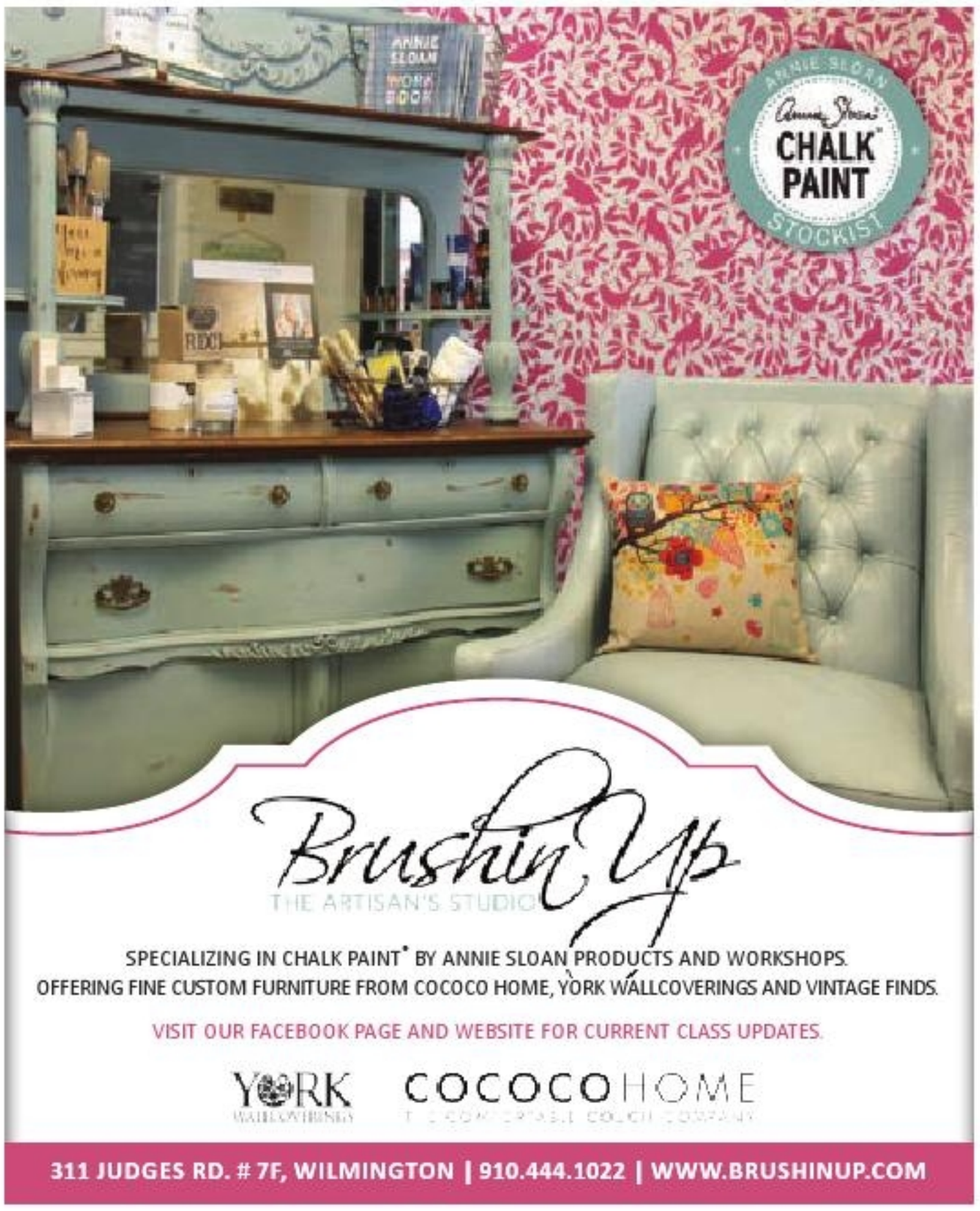

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The Thing About North Carolina Writers

A life of improvisation and friendship

By Wiley Cash

The thing about North Carolina writers is that they stay levelheaded during emergencies.

In February, my wife, Mallory, newborn daughter, Early, and I visited Greensboro, where I'd been scheduled to join three other North Carolina writers for a Saturday evening fundraiser. That afternoon, the fire alarm went off in our hotel, and chaos erupted. A couple of hundred people — including Mallory, Early and me — evacuated to the cold, snowy parking lot while authorities investigated what turned out to be a false alarm. The three of us had been down in the lobby checking out the authors at a book fair, and we weren't dressed for the frigid climes, so imagine our relief when a familiar voice called to us from across the parking lot: It was Clyde Edgerton, sitting inside his car, the heat and radio cranked up. My family and I joined him, and we watched the mass of humanity shiver while the coast was cleared.

"It feels like we're in a lifeboat," Clyde said. We laughed. "You rescued us," Mallory said while we watched Early's cheeks grow rosy in the warmth. I told Clyde that I'd just finished his book *Papadaddy's Book for New Fathers* and that it didn't mention a word about how to survive a hotel fire. He smiled and said fatherhood is all about improvisation.

And that's the thing about North Carolina writers: They're there when you need them.

Before my second novel went to press, I reached out to Jill McCorkle and Lee Smith and asked if they'd consider reading the manuscript and offering a blurb. Not only did they write blurbs for the book jacket that were more beautiful than anything found inside, they showed up to support me during a stop on my book tour, and they brought friends. In Chapel Hill I took to the podium at Flyleaf Books and gazed out at the audience and saw Lee and Jill sitting with their longtime editor, the iconic Shannon Ravenel. It felt like I was shooting basketball with Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant while Phil Jackson looked on.

But that's the thing about North Carolina writers: You never know where they'll turn up.

When my friend Tom Franklin left Mississippi on a book tour, he told his wife he was taking along his copy of *Cold Mountain* just in case he ran into Charles Frazier on his stop in North Carolina. "You're crazy," his wife said. "North Carolina's too big. What are the odds?" Halfway through his tour, Tom realized he needed a new pair of blue jeans, so when he arrived in Raleigh for his book signing at Quail Ridge Books, he headed first to the Crabtree Valley Mall, where he ran into Charles Frazier. "I saw him in J.C. Penney," he said. "I told him I had a copy of *Cold Mountain* out in my car, and he said he'd be happy to sign it."

That's the thing about North Carolina writers: They're incredibly kind.

My mother snatched up a copy of Jason Mott's novel *The Returned* as soon as it was published, and she raved about it for weeks. Her fervor grew even stronger once the television show based on Jason's novel aired. She began following him on social media and attending his book signings with the excitement of a teenager who's just seen her first Justin Bieber music video. I thought she was going to pass out when I told her Jason and I would be doing a book signing together in Topsail Island, and I was even more certain of her passing out once we arrived at Quarter Moon Books and he presented her with a pre-publication review copy of his second novel, *The Wonder of All Things*, which he'd inscribed to "Mama Cash." Now she's a fan for life.

So that's the thing about North Carolina writers: Even their mothers support you.

A couple of years ago I found myself giving a reading at the public library in Shelby only a few weeks after Ron Rash had visited the same branch. I told the audience that it almost felt sacrilegious to follow Ron as if he were my opening act when it should so clearly be the other way around. After the event concluded a woman approached me and introduced herself as Ron's mother; my first thought was, "Ron who?" She must've sensed both my confusion and short memory because she followed by saying, "Ron Rash." I responded by asking, "And you came to see *me*?" Ron was on book tour for his novel *The Cove*, and that month he and I crisscrossed the state and just missed each other many times.

Well, that's the one bad thing about North Carolina writers: Ours is a big state, and we don't see each other as much as we'd like.

Wiley Cash is a New York Times *best-selling author whose second novel,* This Dark Road to Mercy, *was released last year. He lives in Wilmington.*

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Least Tern

The smallest of American terns – but you can't miss them

By Susan Campbell

It likely comes as no surprise to most that a number of colonial waterbird species can be found along our coast at any given time throughout the year. Some, like white ibis or great egrets, are large and showy. And while our raucous gulls seem to be everywhere – and all the time – it is the tern, with its graceful flight and raspy voice, that may be the most numerous here in the summer.

Although trickier to identify than their gull cousins, it is not difficult to spot a handful of tern species on a day's outing. After all, seven different species are known to breed here, and six additional types may be spotted at other times of the year.

The least tern is the smallest of American terns– a robin-sized bird with plumage similar to that of a gull. In summer, least terns have a black cap and eye-line and a bright yellow bill. Their aposematic coloration (light gray backs with pure white undersides) is thought to protect the birds by giving them a camouflaged appearance as seen by predators from above (against the waves) and below (against the bright sky). Males and females look alike, and once the pair-bond is established for the season, both are attentive parents.

For such small birds, least terns are extremely noisy. Their piercing, repeated "pi-dee ka-dik" calls are characteristic. Both their size and vocalizations make them easy to differentiate from other terns, and although they are not the most widespread of the species found along our coast, it is relatively easy to locate them adjacent to the areas where they nest or roost.

Least terns nest in large colonies with common and royal terns, as well as gulls and their other cousin, the black skimmer. According to Walker Golder, deputy director of Audubon North Carolina's coastal office, it looks as if the largest number of least terns will be nesting adjacent to Rich Inlet on the north end of Figure Eight Island this season. There should also be good numbers at Lea and South Hutaff Island as well. Smaller colonies are once again expected at Masonboro Island and the south end of Wrightsville Beach. It is well known that access to these locations is restricted in spring and summer to protect these seabirds during the breeding season. Also, each site is monitored annually from April through June by a team of biologists and dedicated volunteers.

The elaborate courtship of these diminutive terns involves flight displays and posturing, and the male feeding the female during copulation. Females create a simple scrape in the sand in which they lay two eggs. Both parents incubate the eggs and tend to their young, which hatch in about three weeks. Once the young birds emerge from their eggs, they are quickly up and moving about, following their parents within minutes. Not surprisingly, they are sand-colored – so well-camouflaged from predators. They learn where and how to forage quickly, but are brooded regularly by Mom and Dad for a week or two until their adult feathers come in. At that point they can thermoregulate themselves, but youngsters will continue to follow their parents even after they learn to fly. In late summer, when adults will no longer respond to their begging, the youngsters will inevitably begin life on their own.

As strange as it might seem, least terns have also been known to nest on flat rooftops. According to coastal biologist Lindsay Addison, Independence Mall used to have least terns nesting on top of it, but no terns were found on any New Hanover County roof when the waterbird census was conducted last year. Rooftops simulate naturally flat nesting areas but are safe from terrestrial predators such as raccoons and foxes. So long as young birds do not venture too close to the edge, they will be guarded by the many sets of adult eyes in the colony around the clock during the spring and early summer. Locations such as University Centre (Bed, Bath & Beyond) on South College Road tend to be monitored so that nestlings are often rescued should they tumble down from the roof. If you're out that way, look up.

Susan would love to receive your wildlife sightings and photos. She can be contacted by email at susan@ncaves.com.

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Natural Wonders

Take yourself on a journey of discovery right in our own backyard

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIRGINIA HOLMAN

When we moved to the Cape Fear coast a decade back, we got exactly what the glossy brochures promised: bare feet, gentle breezes, strolls along soft sand beaches, emerald waters, a porch swing, and friendly neighbors. Like many others who move to the area, we were "living the dream." I'm ashamed to admit this, but it took us nearly a year to discover that the Wilmington area has a wealth of natural wonders beyond our beaches. So shake the sand out of your shoes and take your friends and family on a excursion of discovery beyond the beach.

Airlie Gardens

Dubbed "the gardens by the sea," this local gem is famous for the Airlie Oak, a 500-year-old tree that has stood sentinel through centuries of history and hurricanes. This mighty live oak stands nearly 130 feet tall; its Spanish moss-draped canopy spans 100 feet. It's considered to be one of the oldest live oak trees in the state, and it's impossible to stand in its colossal shadow without feeling profoundly connected to Wilmington's history. Rest a hand on its ancient trunk and marvel. Imagine how many Wilmingtonians have passed this way since 1545, when this tree first took root. While at the gardens, make sure to make a stop at the native butterfly house. Airlie also offers a monthly guided bird hike the second Wednesday of each month at 8 a.m. If you've never been to the summer concert series, it's held on the Oak Lawn from 6–8 p.m. on the first and third Friday of each month.

Admission is free to members and tickets are $5 for New Hanover County residents; $9 for non-residents. Gardens are located at 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or airliegardens.org

Greenfield Lake

For years after we moved to the Wilmington area, I thought Greenfield Lake was simply a charming small pond alongside busy Third Street. I was pleasantly surprised to discover that much of the lake is hidden from view. As I explored, I was astonished to discover that it's possible to stroll for five shaded miles around the lake.

Rice plantation owner Samuel Green developed the lake in the mid-18th century to assist with production; by the 20th century it was such a popular swimming spot that bathhouses and a pavilion were built. Nowadays the lake is frequented by a rich variety of bird life. It's one of the best places in New Hanover County to view anhingas posed like ancient totems as they

dry their wings. Great egrets and black-crowned night herons also roost along the lake shore, and on warm days, numerous alligators bask at the water's edge. Paddle boats are available to rent for $10. Concerts are also held at the Greenfield Lake Ampitheatre. Check out the lineup at greenfield-lakeamphitheater.com/events.

Greenfield Lake is located at 1941 Ampitheatre Drive, Wilmington

The Live Oaks at Fort Fisher

The first time I saw this long line of windswept live oaks poised on the narrow peninsula at the end of Kure Beach, I gasped. They are achingly beautiful. I now drive past them several times a week, and they never fail to fill me with joy. At sunrise and sunset, these oaks are filled with a soft golden light. Each week photographers pose young couples and families under these weather-gnarled branches as the sun slips into the Cape Fear River, and families often picnic the area in the summer months. The best way to enjoy the Fort Fisher Oaks is to park at Battery Park. From there it's a short stroll north to take the path beneath the trees. Across the street, you may tour the Fort Fisher Historic Site and walk the trail around Civil War earthworks built by approximately 500 slaves in 1862. A small Civil War museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free. Picnicking allowed. Grilling and hammocks are not permitted near the oaks.

Fort Fisher Historic Site is located at 610 Fort Fisher Boulevard South, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-5538

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Eagles Island

Historic Eagles Island is Wilmington's watery version of Central Park. Situated between the Cape Fear and Brunswick rivers, it's visible from our downtown riverfront. Eagles Island isn't a single entity; it's made up of several small, swampy islands that cover 2,100 acres between the Cape Fear and Brunswick rivers. The best way to view the area is with an experienced kayak company or tour boat. A labyrinth of creeks runs through the area, and visitors to Eagles Island will likely see terns, blue herons, great egrets, tricolor herons, several nesting ospreys, remnants of old rice plantation canals, and the half-sunken remains of several ships. It's a true no man's land located just a stone's throw from civilization.

Wilmington Water Tours offers historic tours of the area several times a week. Info: (910) 331-3834 or www.wilmingtonwatertours.net

Sugarloaf at Carolina Beach State Park

It's hard to find a hill to climb in runway-flat New Hanover County, but there's one tucked away in Carolina Beach State Park. "Sugarloaf" is a natural white sand dune approximately 60 feet above sea level. The dune has a long history as a navigational reference. During the Civil War, it was an important Confederate line of defense, and remnants of earthworks are still visible in the area.

Sugarloaf can be reached by a pleasant, mostly shaded three-mile hike. Maps are available at the park headquarters and at each parking lot trailhead. For a tour of a variety of coastal landscapes, start at the Flytrap Trail and take the boardwalk across the bog-like pocosin landscape. Small orchids, pitcher plants, bladderworts, sundews and Venus flytraps can be seen in the area in the summer months. Farther along the trail, you'll travel through a savanna with longleaf pines and turkey oaks. Hang a right when you reach the swamp trail. Here the landscape shifts dramatically to a gum tree and cypress swamp. When you reach Sugarloaf trail, you'll enter a sandhill forest. The top of Sugarloaf is flanked by live oaks draped with Spanish moss. Bring a camera — you won't get a lovelier natural panorama of the Cape Fear River anywhere else.

Each Saturday and Sunday at 10 a.m., a park ranger leads a free, hour-long carnivorous plant hike from the Nature Trail parking lot. Carolina Beach State Park also has drive-in and primitive campsites. Bring a tent, and stay awhile.

Carolina Beach State Park is located at 1010 B Road, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8206.

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Fresh Market @ Hillcrest (Year Round) Fri, 1:30 - 4pm,
S. 13th & Meares St., Wilmington

Riverfront Market (Apr 4 - Nov 21) Sat, 8am - 1pm,
N. Water & Princess St., Wilmington

Wrightsville Beach Market (May 18 - Sep 28) Mon, 8am - 1pm,
Town of Wrightsville Beach municipal grounds, Seawater Lane, Wrightsville Beach

Poplar Grove Market (Apr 1 - Nov 18) Wed, 8am - 1pm,
Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 Hwy. 17, Wilmington

Columbus County Market (May 9 - Dec 12) Sat, 7am - 12pm,
132 Government Complex Rd., Whiteville

Bolivia Brief Market (Apr 30 - Aug 27) Thurs, 11am - 2pm, (Sept - Dec)
every 3rd Thurs, 30 Government Center Drive NE, Bolivia

Kure Beach Market (June 9 - Sept 1) Tues, 8am - 1pm,
Ocean Front Park, Kure Beach

Oak Island Market (May 18 - Aug 31) Mon, 8am - 1pm,
Town Hall 4601 E. Oak Island Dr., Oak Island

Shallotte Market (May 2 - Sep 12) Sat, 8am - noon,
Mulberry Street Park, 123 Mulberry St., Shallotte

Southport Waterfront Market (May 6 - Sep 30) Wed, 8am - 1pm,
Corner of Bay & Davis St., Southport

Onslow County Market #1 (Apr 11 - Nov 7) Sat, 8:30am - 1:30pm,
4024 Richlands Hwy., Jacksonville

Onslow County Market #2 (Apr 16 - Sept 10) Thurs, 10am - 2pm,
100 Recreation Lane at The Commons, Jacksonville

Onslow County Market #3 (Apr 14 - Sept 29) Tue, 10am - 2pm,
Post Exchange & Commissary, Camp Lejeune, Jacksonville

Cape Fear Market (Year Round Deli & Bakery, Produce Apr - Nov)
Mon - Sat, 7am-6 pm, 106 MLK Dr., Elizabethtown

Robeson County Market (May 9 - Nov 28) Wed & Sat, 7am - 1pm,
8th & Elm St., Lumberton

Sampson County Market (Mar 28 - Oct) Wed & Sat, 9am - 2pm,
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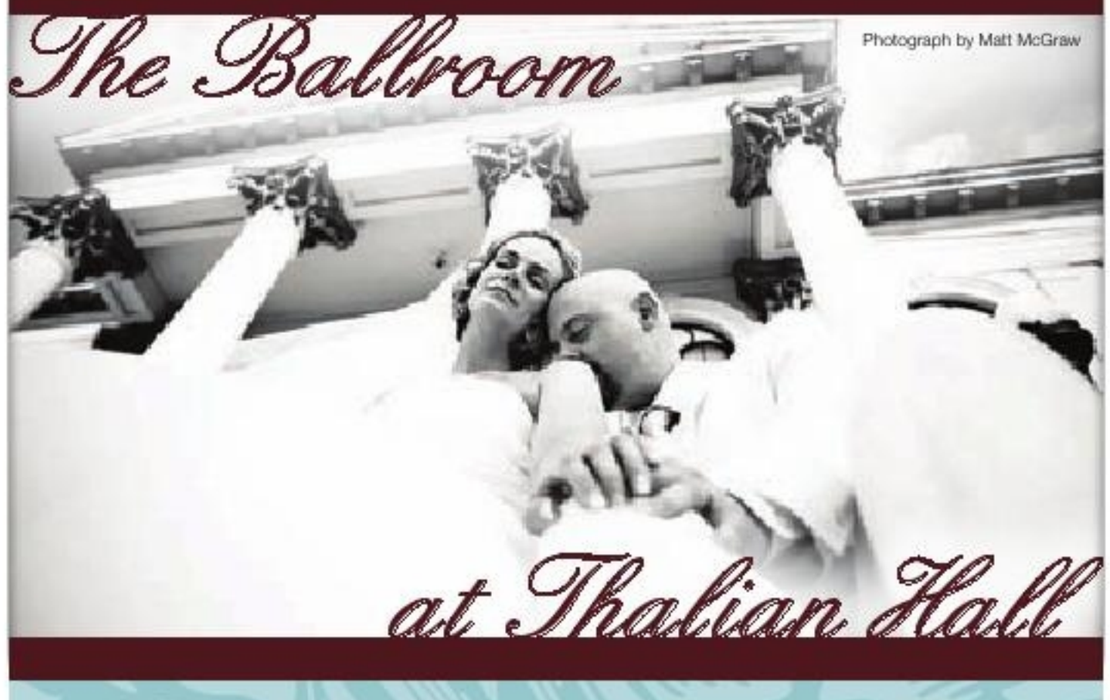

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Beach Friends

Sometimes I breakfast with the shore birds.

For their delight, or mine?

Stale bread?

What simple pleasures satisfy.

Must be male birds.

They squawk,

Dive,

Try to be the best man up

To get the largest hunk.

They circle me,

Swoop,

Then up again:

Dive once more

For that last bite.

A ritual it has become.

I smile.

A nice way to start the day,

Breakfast with my friends.

— *Sandra James Snider*

Photographed at Airlie Gardens

Muses of the Cape Fear

Nine divinely human folks who inspire us and encourage creative compassion in us all

By Gwenyfar Rohler & Ashley Wahl

Photographs by Mark Steelman

In Greek mythology, the Muses are nine in number, each a divine force with a gift to help guide and inspire the human spirit. "All nine of these mythical creatures," writes anthropologist Angeles Arrien, author of *The Nine Muses: A Mythological Path to Creativity*, "inspire us to create our futures and to meet our destinies; compel us to take up our own soul tasks; and require us to bring our authentic natures to earth." In a visionary port city nestled between the Cape Fear River and the Atlantic Ocean, living muses walk among us — men and women who awaken something deep within us with their vision, compassion and timeless talents. Here, we present nine. While these gifted souls embody the mythic past, lucky for us, they're firmly grounded in the shining present.

Lorraine Perry,
Laura Kate Resnik,
Liz Kachris-Jones

Melpomene

Muse of Tragedy

Years after founding the Healing Arts Network at New Hanover Regional Medical Center, **Lorraine Perry** answered her calling and became a certified expressive arts therapist. A master's program (gerontology) in Bath (England) led to an apprenticeship with Dame Cicely Saunders at St. Christopher's Hospice in southeast London, and when she returned to Wilmington in 2004, Lorraine had one mission: to create a holistic environment for the dying and their families. As Healing Arts coordinator and bereavement counselor at Lower Cape Fear Hospice & Life Care Center, Lorraine works with certified therapists and volunteers to provide an array of therapeutic interventions for patients and their families. Among the offerings: creative arts, plant therapy, energy work, a labyrinth for walking meditation, and music for healing and transition. When certified music practitioner Carole Bowman Green plays her lever harp at the dying patient's bedside, explains Lorraine, she is carefully monitoring his or her breath and movement to co-create the song. "I do a lot of anticipatory grief work with family members, especially children, who may be anxious or fearful about the end of life," says Lorraine. She looks to nature for metaphors. "A dead bug, a turning leaf . . . when we talk about the lifetime of a caterpillar or a beetle, it helps to normalize birth, death and life in between."

Urania

Muse of Astronomy

Few things bring **Laura Kate Resnik** greater joy than stealthily slipping one of her hand-sculpted ceramic spirit animals into an unattended purse or coat pocket and witnessing how people react when they discover it. "The animals find who they're supposed to find," she says of her "Wildbeings" project, a venture born from another work-in-progress: creating and illustrating a tarot card deck with a cast of characters inspired by her own animal encounters and imagination. "The whole thing has really sort of taken on a life of its own." With her impish grin, infectious giggle and penchant for mystery, it's no surprise that people often liken the artist to a fox or coyote. And while she admits that her spirit animal project started out as a joke, she quickly discovered its power. "People are always looking for connections," she says. Receiving an owl, hedgehog or turtle can move people to tears. Since she started tagging the animals with a link to her blog, Laura has been able to follow their journeys. But that's not really the point, she says. "It's about making people happy." And for the artist, that's all just a part of her role in the cosmos.

Calliope

Muse of Eloquence and Epic Poetry

Serving as district administrator for the Fifth Judicial District's Guardian ad Litem Program (GAL) requires a fair amount of grit, but for **Liz Kachris-Jones**, it all boils down to compassion. "Child advocacy is embedded in my being," she'll tell you. The backstory: Her father was an orphan. "He never told us about the pain or the trauma, but our family has been defined by the reality of what he experienced." Serving over 400 foster children in New Hanover and Pender counties, GAL recruits and trains volunteers to represent them in court. "You hear 'I work with abused and neglected children' and people think there's no joy there," says Liz. "There's a lot of joy in helping to change the trajectory of a childhood. In my opinion, we have an obligation to honor their biographies and help them get written in a new way." Liz is transparent about the challenges and realities of the job, so people often turn a blind eye. Somebody has to be the voice for the children, right? "I think we all have to do it," Liz eloquently replies. "It's our job as a society to take care of the most vulnerable — our kids. Even if I weren't doing this job, I would be doing something that would be serving that purpose."

Joy Ducree Gregory, Beverly Tetterton, Tracy Byrd

Polyhymnia

Muse of Sacred Hymns

The first time you hear **Joy Ducree Gregory** sing, two things will happen: The hair will stand up on your arms, and you will give her a standing ovation. Although she loves to sing and is quick to acknowledge that music is essential to her soul, she will not believe you if you try to tell her how powerful and beautiful her voice is. "Every time I get up to sing I am trembling on the inside without fail," she confesses. Not that she is new to it. "I've been singing as long as I can remember." The daughter of a minister, she grew up singing in church. "My dad taught me how to sing a cappella." When she smiles at the memory, the whole room lights up. But it's not just her voice that inspires us. As brilliant as she is beautiful (she started college at age 16 with a pre-med scholarship), Joy has a determination that she brings to any endeavor that makes those around her believe that much more in themselves simply because she believes in them. It's the secret magic behind that heavenly voice, a divine instrument that awakens something deep within us whether she is performing Sondheim or the hymns that have underpinned her life.

Clio

Muse of History and Writing

For over 30 years, **Beverly Tetterton** nurtured local historians through her curation of the North Carolina Room at the New Hanover County Public Library. "I didn't expect that public library at the end of the road (this was before I-40) would have a world-class collection of materials: maps, photographs and documents. It made me think that people here must be serious about their history." That observation proved true time and time again. Besides helping historians in their research, Tetterton published extensively and even wrote the signs for the Wilmington Riverwalk. The biggest challenge? Explaining the Cape Fear River on one sign. "I had history, the ecology . . . it was so hard to take that huge subject and do it in 250 words." But it was good preparation for a brave new frontier of history: writing for the Wilmington History Tour app. "Young people use apps," she states. History is a living thing, it happens every day around us. Tetterton doesn't fight that, she embraces it as another tool to inspire people with the story of our singular community.

Terpsichore

Muse of Dance

Tracy Byrd admits that if he could do it over, he probably would have taken a dance class before he launched himself into the world of musical theater. In spite of that, he's danced his way into the hearts of Wilmington theatergoers and recently won Best Choreographer at the *Star News* Theatre Awards for his work on True 2 You Productions' *Ain't Misbehavin'*. It's quite a testament to talent and hard work that he has accomplished so much with very little formal training. Along the way, Tracy was invited to tour as a dancer on cruise ships. "Dancing on the water!" He shakes his head and recounts the difficulty of learning how to correct and compensate for the lack of balance. His most recent project: Playing the part of the legendary Gene Kelly in Thalian Association's production of *Singin' in the Rain* and hopefully inspiring a new generation of young dancers out there.

Elizabeth Loparits,
Malena Mörling,
Timmy Sherrill

Euterpe

Muse of Music

As the end of a semester nears, with students scrambling to squeeze in jury rehearsals before their final performances, staff accompanist **Elizabeth Loparits** sometimes finds herself practicing and rehearsing more than ten hours a day. "But you're always smiling," one student observed. "How do you do that?" For Elizabeth, an ethereal beauty whose glacial blue eyes reveal her inner light, the answer is obvious: The students inspire her. "They are looking at me and they are smiling and beaming," she says. "What else could I do but smile? I'm really just a mirror of them." Having grown up in Hungary, Elizabeth never dreamed she'd have the opportunity to travel and live abroad. But music opens doors. As an instructor, she is able to witness this on a regular basis. "Don't play what's on the paper," she tells her students. "Play what came before it." In addition to her role as instrumental collaborative pianist in the Department of Music at UNCW, Elizabeth performs solo recitals and also serves as an accompanist for Opera Wilmington. She describes the process of co-creating with others as pure magic. "I think the wonderful thing about musical collaboration is that the interpretation is a joint effort — like dancing with another person as opposed to dancing alone."

Erato

Muse of Love Poetry

Our Erato doesn't write love poems, but get her talking about poetry and her passion for verse is transparent. "I am happiest when I am working on a poem," says Swedish-American poet **Malena Mörling**, who discovered her calling in tenth grade when a high school English teacher read "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" aloud. "It was the most incredible, most beautiful thing I had ever experienced." Her dream of becoming an American poet did not fade when her family moved back to Sweden from New York when Malena was 17. "I babysat every night to have enough money to buy an airplane ticket back," she says. When she returned, opportunities to write and study poetry began to present themselves in the form of scholarships and fellowships, including the prestigious Guggenheim. "I feel like I have been gifted by the universe in so many ways," says the poet, whose published books include *Ocean Avenue*, *Astoria*, and *The Star By My Head: Poets From Sweden*, a collection of translated works. As a professor of poetry at UNCW, Malena simply does what comes naturally to her. "All I can do as a teacher is share the poetry I love and ask questions. If the students can feel my love of poetry, it might wake them up to love it too."

Thalia

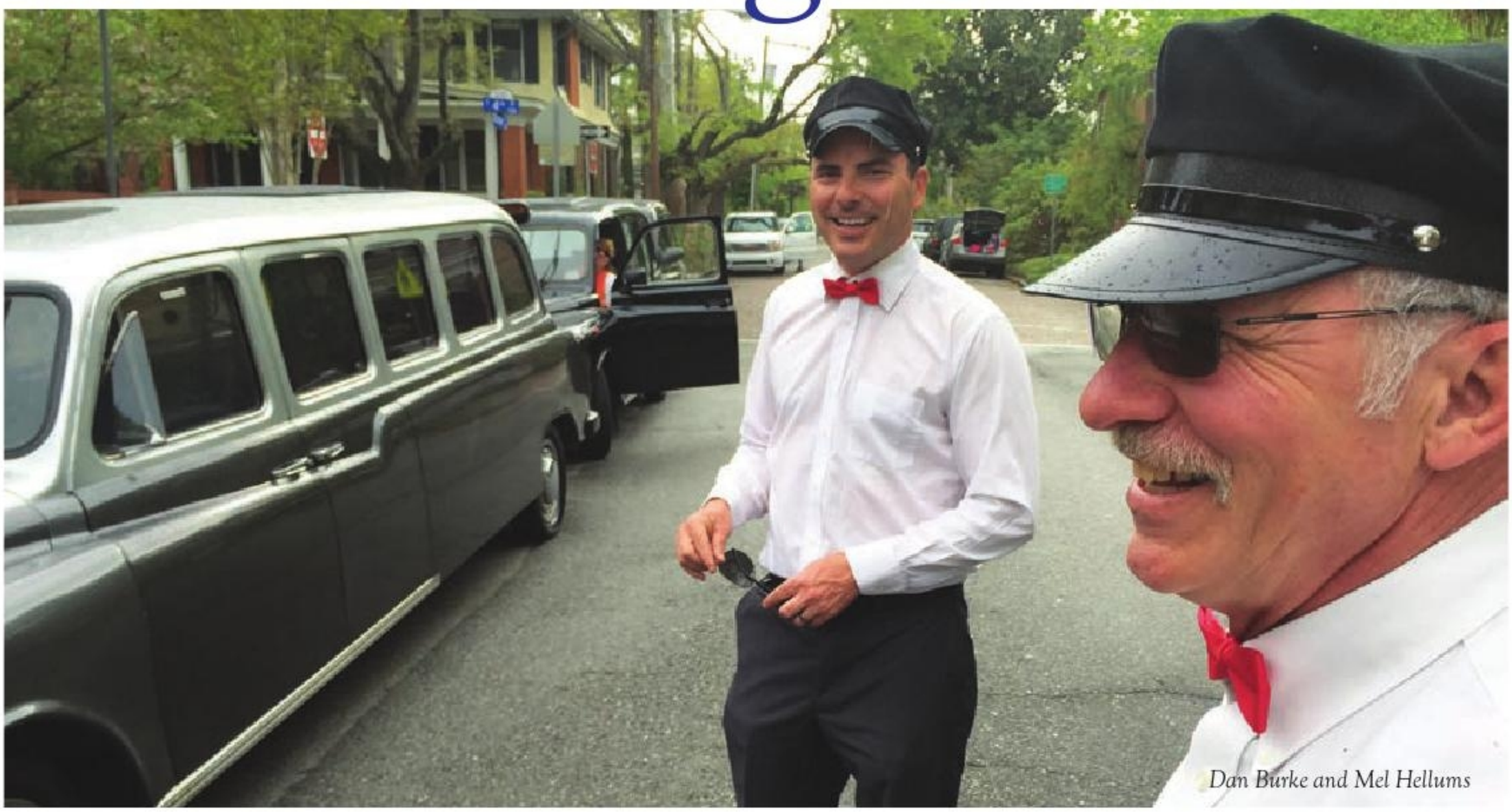
Muse of Comedy

For some people, owning their own comedy club would be a vehicle for their own career: every night headlining the bill. For others, it might be an opportunity to own their own business and have a constant stream of entertainment when they come to work. For **Timmy Sherrill**, an accomplished comedian in his own right, it's about mentoring a group of people who share his passion. As he once told us, "They're building the community." By "they" he means the weekly open mic performers, the improv troupes, live talk shows, comedy bingo organizers, the wedding party (yes, Sherrill has hosted and officiated a wedding at the club), and whoever has the latest idea asking Sherrill for permission to try it out on the stage at Dead Crow Comedy Club. A true labor of love, Dead Crow came back from the flames of The Soapbox Laundro-Lounge closing and is soaring high with a loyal following of comedy patrons and rising comedy stars. In the meantime, he does get to come to work every night and be entertained by a talented group of friends, while still performing occasionally. It's the best of all worlds.

London Calling

Our man in the cab keeps his cool and a stiff upper lip as 226 years of taxi history goes on parade

Story and Photographs by Mark Holmberg



Dan Burke and Mel Hellums

"It's so perfect, the weather. So English," says Dan Burke with his British accent as a light rain fell on us.

"Or German," adds Mel Hellums, the quite proper former military intelligence man once stationed in Europe who would be driving Miss Daisy on this red-letter day.

It's the morning of the much-anticipated North Carolina Azalea Festival parade. The hundreds of floats, marchers, riders and dancers are all queued up on South Third Street and along several side streets.

It's getting rather difficult to maintain a stiff upper lip about the swirling clouds and occasional bursts of rain. A few Belles have hoisted their skirts and fled their floats.

We're lined up neatly — bumper to shining bumper — in the 300 block of Orange Street, about to become the rarest collection of London cabs ever to be paraded in North America. Six taxis that have motored for a total of 226 years and more than a million miles.

"If they could talk," Dan says.

But, in a way, they do. Each cab speaks directly about a certain era in London, a city famed for its taxis and cabbies.

"They are an icon of London," Dan explained a week earlier during our parade prep at his shop headquarters by Wilmington International Airport. "Right there with the red bus and the red phone box. Very romantic."

And because these cabs have wandered quite far from home, each has a story to tell. That long, grey stretch cab that's carrying some of the winners of this morning's parade mile race? It previously transported the pets of the rich and famous in Beverly Hills after finishing its London duty.

The red 1972 Austin convertible that will be in another part of the parade? "Lilly May," as she's called, started out shuttling English horse racing fans from the Berkshire heliport to the famed Ascot Racecourse before coming to Wilmington to transport bar patrons at Lilly May's British Pub (now the Duck & Dive) on Dock Street.

That 1956 Austin FX3 — "Miss Daisy" — was kept in museum shape by the Richmond, Virginia, gentleman who imported it until the day he died. "It was his pride and joy," Dan says. The gentleman's wife was named Daisy.

Dan, the owner of this rare fleet collectively known as The British Taxi, is driving a 1968 Beardmore with Scottish roots. It was one of just 700 made, hence its Sean Connery code name, "007."

And your faithful scribe is piloting a 1978 Austin FX4. This is the classic black cab of London, a body style manufactured from 1958 to 1997, making it possibly the most signature taxi in the world.

Like most of the others, it has a faithful little four-cylinder diesel motor that pushed it over many of London's 25,000 streets. The inside of the old cab has a distinctive smell that is so evocative — you know it even if you've never smelled it before.

We're all in black trousers, white shirts, red bow ties and black chauffeur's

caps, watching the rain and waiting for the parade to start.

It's quite amazing, really, how a hat can transform you.

Dan, without his driver's cap, hardly resembles a cabbie or a guy who would love tinkering with an old taxi. He looks like a sharp, fit, 35-year-old entrepreneur who stumbled quite accidentally into this business.

He owns his own video production firm he grew here after meeting his bride, Rosemary, while they were both studying in England. She's a North Carolina girl and he's from Canvey Island in Essex, east of London.

Here in Wilmington, he was given the Lilly May convertible as payment for a promotional video he produced in 2009. The old taxi needed some serious work.

"As soon as I got it looking all spiffy, I started driving it around. It was just me, a cap and this red taxi."

Immediately, friends and acquaintances wanted to use the red convertible in their weddings. Dan quickly realized he might need another.

"It kind of went off on its own," he told me as we toured his garage.

He has ten cabs now, from years 1956 to 2003.

"They all do different things," he said. "If you want to see the evolution of the British taxi, here they are."

His cabs have been used for movies and television shows and promotional events. Two of his taxis are currently wrapped as advertisements for the Charlotte Tilbury makeup firm.

They've been trucked all over the country, answering the call for that romantic, singular statement than only an old British taxi can make.

"You never know who's going to reach out to you," Dan said, looking and sounding like a go-getting marketing whiz. But in the light parade-day rain, transformed by his driver's cap, Dan looks exactly the part of a London cabbie. Central casting would pick him right out for the role.

Ditto for his right-hand man, the rather mysterious and moustached and oh-so capable Mel Hellums, the military intelligence veteran.

Cap or no cap, he looks the part. And after you get to know him a bit, you get the distinct impression that if one of the taxis was stolen and crashed, not only would he find out who did it and take care of that person, he'd have that cab back up and running in no time.

Of course, he's our lead driver, at the wheel of the oldest cab in the fleet — driving Miss Daisy.

"I love Daisy," Mel says. "I love the way she looks. To me, it's just a classic-looking car. But each one has their own personality."

He and Dan are taking care of the last-minute details as the rain eases. Wiping down the cars. Tying balloons to the bumpers. Checking with parade marshals. Arranging passengers. (Race winner Amy Alexander and her son, Addison, are in my cab.) Making sure all the running lights match up and giving us precise directions on how we're to drive in formation.

It's the first parade for Dan's fleet of taxis and you can feel his excitement. There's a lot that could go wrong with a small group of cars that have lived 226 years. But Sgt. Major Hellums is as cool as an English cucumber, leaving me with another impression — don't screw this up!

And we're off!

The cabs all move off smartly, each driver wedged in the tight quarter that is the lot of the London cabbie. All the room, after all, is for the passengers — who sit facing one another — and their luggage.

We are, for the moment, representing what is perhaps the most demanding of all public transportation jobs.

Each prospective London cabbie must memorize every London street, every shortcut, route, hazard, landmark and hotel — The Knowledge — before they can earn the coveted green and white cabbie's badge. (*National Geographic* once compared it to becoming a U.S. Navy SEAL.)

So it's stiff upper lip driving. No yelling out at the throngs on the parade route who are pointing and waving and, perhaps, remembering. How many in the crowd had ridden in a London cab, or recognized it from a movie or TV show?

As we pass the reviewing stand, we hear the applause as the announcer shares that this is the rarest collection of British taxis "ever paraded in North America."

We tip our hats and maintain our tight formation under the grey, blustery, British-like skies.

PHOTOGRAPH UPPER RIGHT BY JE DEPEW

Above: Amy Alexander and driver Mark Holmberg

Below: Dan Burke and the evolution of the British taxi

The House Where Art Lives

Family warmth and human creativity are the backbeat of this historic district home

By Jill Gerard · Photographs by Rick Ricozzi

The J.O. Hinton House has been an anchor in the Carolina Heights neighborhood, part of the historic district in Wilmington, for over a century. The yellow stucco exterior is warm and inviting. Mature shrubs and trees soften the lines of the neoclassical columns that define the front porch. But one of the first things passersby might notice when they see it are the bottles, marking the edges of the garden and walkway and filling up the inside windowsills.

James Oscar Hinton and his wife, Estelle, built this home as an investment property. In the beginning, the house was a single story. The upstairs addition would come in the 1920s, when Reverend Royal of Trinity United Methodist Church called the place home.

In its hundred years, the J.O. Hinton House has had just four owners, most recently, Dargan and Virginia "Ginny" Wright-Frierson.

Dargan and Ginny moved to Wilmington in 1977. Dargan was fresh out of graduate school and had just accepted a job in the department of mathematics at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. They first imagined a big rambling farmhouse with lots of land or a place on the water. But when they saw this giant old home in the historic district, it won their hearts. Ginny shared her dream of filling up the seven bedrooms with children and artwork, and in the intervening years, the dream became reality.

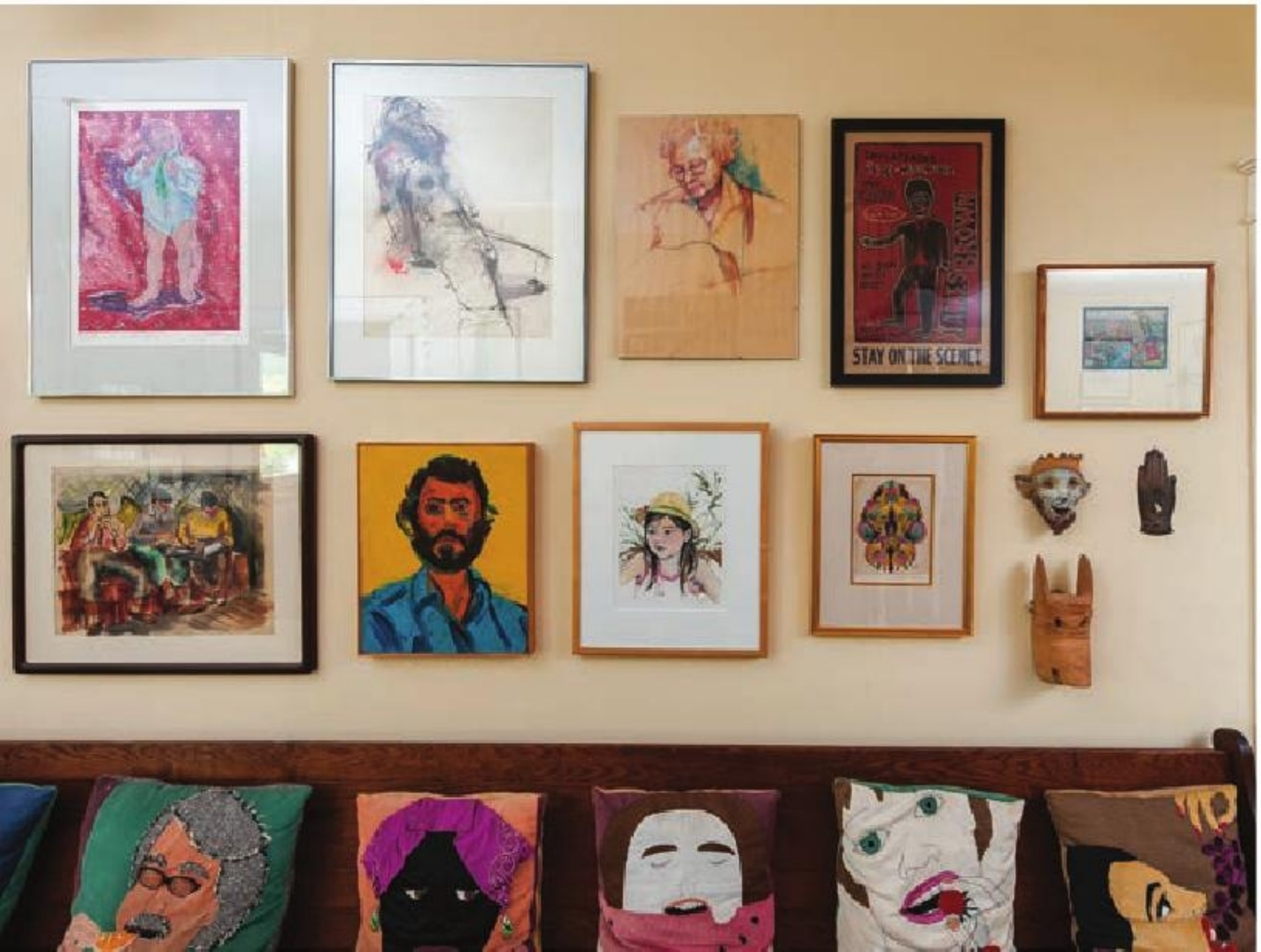
Today, warmth and creative energy are the backbeat in this home.

Wide steps lead from the walkway to the welcoming front porch where benches and swings tempt visitors to pause and sit. The striking stained glass on the front door, the work of Brooks Koff, speaks to Ginny's long friendships with other Wilmington artists.

As one might expect in a century-old home, the ceilings are high and the hallways wide. Today, a long church pew accented with whimsical pillows lines the foyer wall; sixteen metal fish school high above. The graceful sculpture, work of local metal artist Michael van Hout, reflects the light and draws the gaze up.

In the front sitting room, an army of armadillos and a bottlenose dolphin skull, which Ginny found rolling in the surf at Masonboro Island, hint at Ginny's love for the natural world. Though the sharp conical teeth are no longer present, the skull is remarkable — upper and lower jaws complete. "Isn't it beautiful?" asks Ginny, who loaded the artifact into her kayak and rowed back across the waterway with it. The beauty of the natural world is one of the things that fires her urge to create art.

Across the center hallway, the large living room features cozy sitting areas anchored by an antique player piano that Ginny got in trade for a portrait. The Kranich and Bach piano no longer has the apparatus to play alone — but it still


STAY ON THE SCENE!

sounds great. The living room windows are tall, many with diamond panes. In the front corner, a large wire giraffe (also the work of van Hout) reaches for the ceiling. Everywhere you look something captures the eye and imagination.

Peek through the doorway into the old butler's pantry and find Dargan's collection of stringed instruments, which includes a Martin D-28, a gift from Ginny some years ago, a Gibson J-45, and a Framus upright bass. Dargan is an accomplished bass and guitar player, and the musical vibrations are no doubt part of the energy of this home. The upright bass in particular changes perhaps the molecular makeup as the vibrations travel down through the endpin and literally vibrate through the floors and walls of the house. Dargan shares, "Our old house has some nice acoustics for music playing, with the big rooms and high ceilings, and I especially like playing in the living room, with other players, other stringed instruments, too — vocals can fill the room."

Just beyond the staircase is the dining room and its lovely stained glass light fixture. In the back corner, just off the dining room, is a bedroom and bath where a *trompe l'oeil* floor recreates a brick garden path that meanders through an array of flowers in full bloom. Each room echoes the particulars of life that call for Ginny's attention.

Ginny's humor and hospitality converge in the kitchen. Bright pottery fills the shelves. Along the top of the cupboards, a collection of colorful shopping bags fills the space. Clear glass bottles line the windowsills. The hand-painted floor invites guests to linger and enjoy two sunny-side-up eggs and bacon. A knife and fork wait for someone to dig in. By the back door, a framed list in child's handwriting catalogues various "sicnesis" including "flew," "nomonya," and "chikin pooks." This is an early project of Ginny and Dargan's daughter. "She always liked to make lists," says Ginny.

Through the back door, the garden calls. Again, bottles line the paths — here leading to a glimmering bottle house. The doorway features large green magnums. The wall is a collection of all possible shades of green and clear glass. Step inside and the pattern dazzles even on an overcast day. This smaller bottle house, a precursor to the Minnie Evans Bottle Chapel at Airlie Gardens, was designed and built by the artist in residence.

Just beyond the bottle house and courtyard is a garage-turned-garden house, a large and bright workspace for Ginny. As she tells stories about the early years in the home, her dedication to her profession and calling is clear. "I just had to get to the studio to paint," she confides. "When the children were small, they went to nursery school twice a week. After I dropped them off, I'd rush home to paint."

But with two small children filling the house with their energy and activity, Ginny wanted to move the paints out of the house. Working within the limits of the historic property required ingenuity.

Today, the garden house features skylights on the back side of the room — not visible from Seventeenth Street. The large paned windows recall the ones you might find on old garage doors. From the street, the side of the building retains the original appearance. But inside, the result is a bright space that has served its purpose over the years.

Ginny works mainly in watercolor and oils, but also in pen and pencil, linoleum cut prints, book illustration and writing. Her watercolors are always painted out in the world, *en plein air*. Some paintings capture the hills and bays of Ireland; others, the gardens and byways of Italy; or blueberry bushes growing right here in her garden.

She loves to work in oil on paper during her travels and oil on canvas back home in the studio. Her most recent work fills the back wall. Look closely and see that the paintings reveal a trip across America. Ginny confides that the trip was "an excuse to paint all the things I love — landscapes, rocks, animals." She describes the paintings as glimpses — what a traveler might see as she looked out the car window. The paintings — all 16 by 20 feet — are the size of car windows. Calves, donkeys and buffalo; mountains, red rock canyons, stands of tall pine trees, and rocky coves; an old stove and a small child wading. Each captures a moment on a trip across the West.

In the garden house, potted plants and art in process call for my attention. Ginny's small dog is curled up on a loveseat sleeping. The artist hands me a framed photograph that captures her in action painting a large 20- by 24-foot canvas. In the photograph, the canvas is spread on the floor but the image captures the tops of trees. Seeing it makes me feel a bit dizzy with the perspective. The photograph captures Ginny as she worked on the mural for Columbine High School. The project was part of the work to reconstruct the school after the 1999 shooting. It honors the memories of the slain students

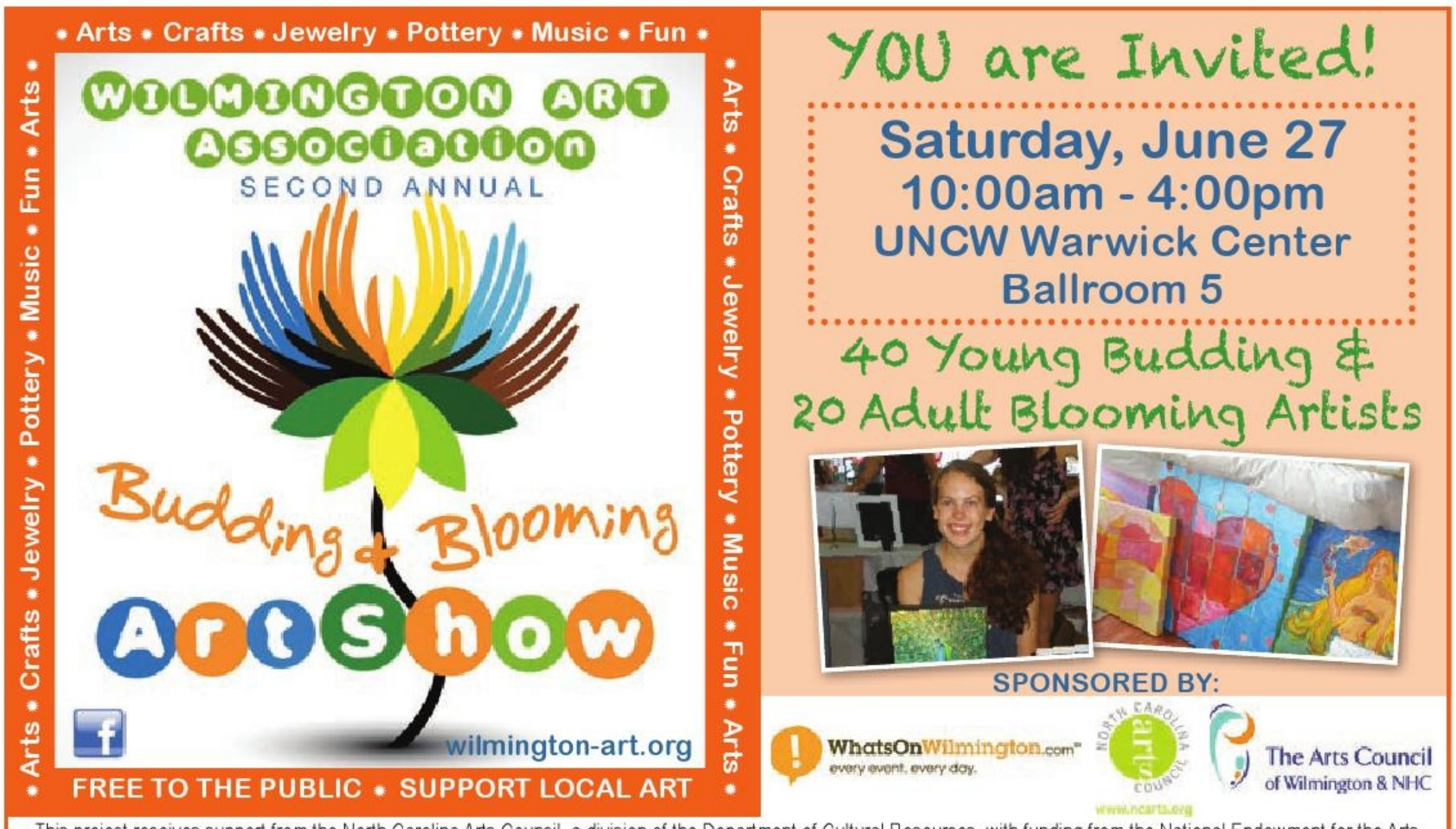
and creates a new space for the survivors and current students to move beyond the horrific past.

Ginny seems to look beyond the garden house this day as she recounts the story of that commission. Dargan and their son, Dargan Michael, helped with the mathematical calculations needed to capture the perspective correctly. The canvases were so large that Ginny worked with them rolled up and then, later, unrolled across the floor of the UNCW gymnasium. There, she would climb high onto the catwalks to look down at the carefully measured canvases before rushing back down to sketch in the trees. Daughter Amy, then in high school, helped with the painting, often working with a brush attached to a long stick.

Today the canvases fill large panels suspended from the ceiling of Columbine High School's large two-story atrium. When students, community members and visitors walk in and look up, they have the impression that they are in an old-growth forest. The comforting images and play of light transport them to a place that feels peaceful and soothing.

At first, Amy assisted with the mathematical calculations and planning, then some of the painting. But the real transformation came as Amy assisted with the installation. During this time, Amy began a conversation with a boy whose sister was killed during the shooting. He mentioned to Amy he wanted to see the installation, but he did not want to go inside the building. Later he accompanied Amy to the doors just to look inside. But the paintings drew him fully in, and he confided to her that the effect made him "feel closer to his sister since she died."

This is the power of art that Ginny returns to as she talks about her work, about the garden house and studio, about the things that fill up her home. Each piece has a story. Each story reminds us what it means to be human, and about what it means to be part of a larger community.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"The History & Importance of the American Legion"
Presented by Tom Townsend, Judge Advocate of the American Legion and the Longest Standing Member and Ken Pike, Adjutant of the American Legion, Post 10
Monday, June 8th at 2 p.m. | Brightmore Independent Living
Learn about the history behind our American Legion, what they do and what they mean to our community, and their primary mission of honoring veterans in Wilmington through the Honor Guard. Includes an official guide to flag etiquette. **RSVP by Friday, June 5, 2015.**

"Headache Awareness Lunch & Learn"
Presented by Dr. Levi Bradburn, D.C. of Wellness Champions
Wednesday, June 17th at 2 p.m. | Brightmore Independent Living
During National Migraine and Headache Awareness Month, learn how to avoid headaches without medication, the Five Factors to health, and the solution to 90% of all headaches. Seating is limited and lunch is included. **RSVP by Friday, June 12, 2015.**

"Salute to the Troops Concert & Dance": Featuring Patriotic and WWII Big Band Favorites
Wednesday, July 1st from 6:30-9 p.m.
Brightmore Independent Living Portico & Outdoor Stage
Celebrate our country's freedom at a **FREE** Concert and Dance featuring the American Legion Honor Guard in formation, presenting the Flag and leading the Pledge of Allegiance and National Anthem. View our Veteran's Wall featuring the "storyboards" of veterans who participated in our Treasured Memories program and enjoy an evening of patriotic and WWII era favorites by the Wilmington Big Band and other patriotic acts plus complimentary hors d'oeuvres, desserts, and punch. Adult Beverages available with donations accepted for the Wilmington Parkinson's and Lewy Body Support Group. **RSVP by Friday, June 26, 2015.**

"Everyday Essential Wellness": Exploring the Uses of Natural Therapies & Essential Oils as a Foundation for Whole Body Health
Presented by Beth Mincher, CHC, AADP of Elemental Wellness
Monday, July 13th at 2 p.m. | Brightmore Independent Living
Join us for an enlightening session and learn how Essential Oils provide emotional support for conditions ranging from minor aches and pains to Stress Disorders, Sleep Issues, Control of Blood Sugar, Memory, Mental Clarity, Anxiety & Depression, Arthritis, Neuropathy, Alzheimer's, Dementia, Parkinson's, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. **RSVP by Wednesday, July 8, 2015.**

"Current Affairs in Veterans Affairs": A Veterans Benefits Seminar
Presented by Kelly Shovelin & Matthew Schrum, Four Pillars Law Firm
Wednesday, July 22nd at 2:30 p.m. | The Kempton at Brightmore Assisted Living
Did you know the Veteran's Administration has recently deployed an attack on valuable benefits designed to assist wartime veterans and their surviving spouses? Join us for an informative discussion of recent developments and learn how you can defend against this attack to protect the benefits you have earned. **RSVP by Monday, July 20, 2015.**

Reserve your seat for these FREE events by calling 910.350.1980.

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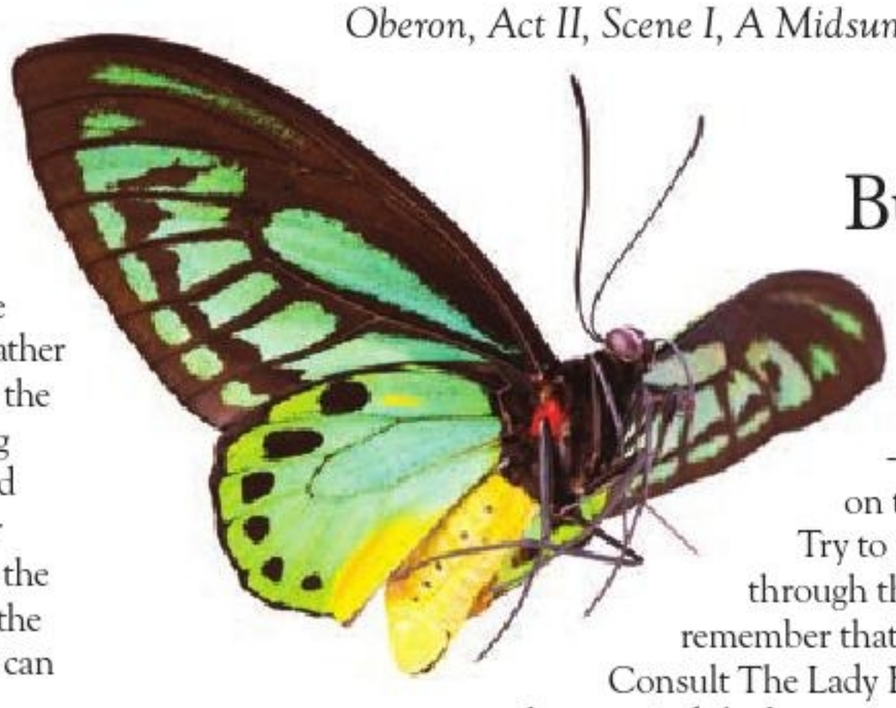
ALMANAC

June

By Rosetta Fawley

"I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;"
Oberon, Act II, Scene I, A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Don't forget Father's Day on June 21. It's also the summer solstice. Make a weekend of it. Take your father to Sweden, where you can celebrate Midsummer at the same time, dancing round the maypole and feasting on herring and new potatoes, strawberries, beer and schnapps. Learn a drinking song or three. Head for the north and party there — the sun will stay up for the whole weekend. Or stay in the Americas and go to the Museo de Arte de Ponce in Puerto Rico, where you can gaze at Lord Leighton's masterpiece *Flaming June.*



Butterflies Are Free

Another reason to put away the pesticides? It's National Butterfly Education and Awareness Day on June 6. Back to those native plants — butterflies have evolved to thrive on the nectar of their environment. Try to plant so that your garden flowers through the spring, summer and fall, and remember that butterflies like to feed in the sun. Consult The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center website to find the best native plants for butterflies in North Carolina: www.wildflower.org/collections. The Almanac's favorite choice for this month is, naturally, the Juneberry.

Mr. Toad's Abode

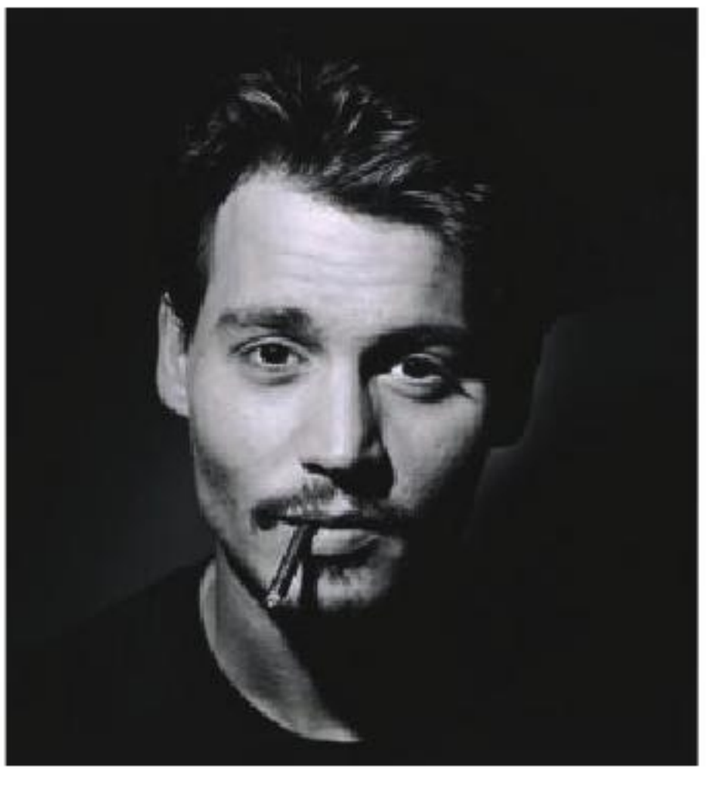
Keep an eye out for June bugs, also known as green June beetles. As their name suggests, the adults start to appear in June. It's a little early for rotting fruit, which is their favorite food, but the grubs can wreak havoc on a lawn. Insecticide is an option, but the Almanac is fond of insects and all who feast on them — who wants a silent summer? — and does not condone these methods. Attract frogs and toads, the gardener's best friends, to your garden instead. Build a toad abode; it's as simple as upturning a ceramic pot in a shady spot on the dirt. Balance it on a rock or two so the toad has an entrance and place a saucer of water nearby if you don't have a pond.

It's easy to make a small pond to attract frogs. A sunken galvanized pail or tub of water will work if space is at a premium. Add rocks and plant native vegetation so the frogs can get in and out easily and have a little shade.

Small snakes (don't scream, they eat vermin) like vegetation too, as do lizards, green anoles, skinks and toads. Plant densely and try to choose native varieties, which will do better than imports and require less maintenance. Keep brush and arrange it in small piles to make cozy homes for reptiles. Don't throw away rocks but arrange them nearby in a sunny spot to give your new friends somewhere to bask. For more details visit ncwildlife.org. At night, enjoy the chorus.

June's Main Man

"I first heard of [Johnny Cash] through Elvis Presley. Elvis would make me go into these little cafés and listen to John [on the jukebox] when we played in the South in the Carolinas and all down through Florida and Georgia. Then, one night backstage at the Opry, this man walked up to me and said, 'I want to meet you, I'm Johnny Cash.' And I said, 'Well, I oughta know who you are. Elvis can't even tune his guitar unless he goes, 'Everybody knows where you go when the sun goes down.'" *June Carter Cash*



Birthday Boys

Happy birthday to Johnny Depp, star of *Benny and Joon.* Mr. Depp celebrates his birthday on June 9. Also born on that date: Tsar Peter the Great (1672–1725), Cole Porter (1891–1964), Jackie Wilson (1934–1984), Donald Duck (1934) and Eric Hobsbawm (1917–2012).

June 2015

Arts Calendar

Shakespeare on the Green

6/1-2

The Jeff Austin Band Performs

6/3

Spring Flea Market

6/5-7

Boogie in the Park

6/7

6/1 Word Weavers
7–9 p.m. Christian writers' group meeting. Life Point Church, 3534 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 619-7344 or sondradron@bellsouth.net.

6/1 & 2 Shakespeare on the Green
8 p.m. *Taming of the Shrew*. Live Shakespearean theater, al fresco. Also runs 6/8–11. Concessions available for purchase. Free. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-2878 or capefearshakespeare.com.

6/3 WHQR Luncheon
12 p.m. Fundraising Luncheon for WHQR Public Radio featuring NPR's award-winning journalist Cokie Roberts as keynote speaker. Suggested donation: $100. Hilton Wilmington Riverside, 301 North Water Street, Wilmington. Info: whqr.org.

6/3 Live Music
8 p.m. Performances by The Jeff Austin Band, Danny Barnes, Ross Martin and Eric Thorin. Admission: $18–25. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

6/4 Rich Inlet Boat Tour
8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Join Wrightsville Beach Scenic Tours, Inc. for a guided cruise and island excursion. Lunch provided. Admission: $40–55. Coastal Education Center, 309 West Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: www.nccoast.org.

6/4 Hummingbird Program
9–10 a.m. Join Wild Bird and Garden to learn about hummingbirds and how to attract them to your yard. Free. Dry Street Pub & Pizza, 101 East Brown Street, Southport. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

6/4 Wine & Design
4:30–7:30 p.m. Join Wine & Design for an on-site painting class at Bellamy Mansion. Bring your own food and beverages. Admission: $55 (includes tour). Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

6/4 Opening Art Reception
6:30–8:30 p.m. Acrylic artist Jillian Boivin. Artful Living Group, 112 Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-7822 or www.artfullivinggroup.com.

6/5 Coastal Birding Cruise
10–11 a.m. Board the *Shamrock* with Captain Joey Abbate and learn about the area's unique coastal ecology. Admission: $25–35. Blockade Runner Beach Resort Dock, 275 Waynick Boulevard, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 509-2838 or www.nccoast.org.

6/5 Airlie Concert
6–8 p.m. The Midatlantic (new grass/folk/Americana). Food and wine available for purchase. Admission: $2–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

6/5 Sunset on the Cape Fear
6 p.m. Eat, drink and be merry at this don't-miss-it fundraiser to benefit local non-profits and help fund scholarships for UNCW and CFCC students. Includes live music, games, and live and silent auctions. Hosted by the Wilmington West Rotary Club. Admission: $30. Wilmington Marine Center, 3410 River Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 274-6171 or www.eventbrite.com.

6/5–7 Spring Flea
3–9 p.m. (Friday); 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Saturday); 12–5 p.m. (Sunday). Shop vintage, retro and up-cycled treasures. Admission: $5. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or brooklynartsnc.com.

6/5–7 Live Theater
7 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Southern comedy dinner show: *Raney* by Clyde Edgerton. Admission: $22–38. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

6/5–28 Shakespeare on the Green
8 p.m. *All's Well That Ends Well*. Live Shakespearean theater, al fresco. Free. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-2878 or capefearshakespeare.com.

6/6 Alzheimer's NC Walk
7 a.m. 5K run for Alzheimer's includes family entertainment, music, food and raffles. Legion Stadium, 2221 Carolina Beach Road,

The History of the American Legion

6/8

Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-1944 or www.alznc.org.

6/6 Bonsai Society Show
9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Bonsai exhibition styled by Cape Fear Bonsai Society members. Features live demos; bonsais, tools and books for sale. NHC Arboretum Auditorium, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: www.capefearbonsaisociety.org.

6/6 Live Music
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Revolver Music Productions students (ages 7–18) showcase their newly honed skills and rock the stage. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

6/6 Plantpalooza
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Native plants and heirloom vegetables for sale; micro-workshops; local growers on hand to answer questions. Free admission. Wild Bird & Garden sidewalk, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

6/6 Carolina Beach Music Festival
11 a.m. Full day of sun and music on the beach. Entertainment by Gary Lowder & Smokin' Hot, Band of Oz, and Jim Quick & Coastline. Official after party at The Lazy Pirate with the Dark 30 Boogie Band. Admission: $20–25. Carolina Beach Boardwalk, Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

Coastal Carolina Clay Guild Closing Reception

6/26

6/6 Lobster Fest
11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Fresh Atlantic lobsters, live or cooked. Advance order; delivery available. Church of the Servant Episcopal Church, 4925 Oriole Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-0616 or cosepiscopal.ecdio.org.

6/6 & 7 CAM Workshop
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Saturday); 12–4 p.m. (Sunday). Facilitators Dina Greenberg and Lawrence Winters lead the "Stories We Carry", a two-day workshop which aims to create a safe place to share stories born from war. Admission: $110–125. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Writers Conference

6/26–28

6/7 Environmental Event
1–4 p.m. Water, Water Everywhere! Mini-seminars, demos, make-and-take projects and family-friendly activities to promote environmental awareness. Free. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

6/7 Gallery Talk
2 p.m. Historian Jan Davidson tells behind-the-scenes stories of what she discovered while researching and curating the new exhibit, *Reflections in Black and White*. Free. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4362 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

6/7 Boogie in the Park
5–7 p.m. The Midatlantic (new grass/folk/Americana). Bring blankets and snacks. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

6/7–14 Port City Music Festival
5 p.m. (Sundays); 7:30 p.m. (Tuesday – Friday). A week of great music and world-class performing artists. Ensemble-in-residence Camerata Philadelphia will perform under the direction of conductor Dr. Stephen Framil. Free admission. Locations include Kenan Chapel in Landfall (6/7); Windermere Presbyterian Church (6/9); Cameron Art Museum (6/11); UNCW Beckwith Hall (6/12); First Presbyterian Church (6/14). Info: (910) 512-6251 or www.portcitymusicfestival.org.

Movies at the Lake

Sundays

6/7–28 Adult Summer Studies
2–4:30 p.m. "True Stories Matter: Creative Nonfiction." Delve deep into the narrative modes of fiction with Instructor Margo Williams to create meaningful stories. Admission: $100–125. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

6/8 History Lecture
2 p.m. "The History and Importance of the American Legion." Includes an official guide to flag etiquette. Free. Brightmore Independent Living, 2324 South Forty-First Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 350-1980 or www.brightmoreofwilmington.com.

6/8 & 9 Youth Nature Program
10–11 a.m. Nature program for children ages 2–5. Theme: Awesome Amphibians. Admission: $3. Halyburton Park, 4099 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-0075 or www.halyburtonpark.com.

6/10 Bird Hike
8–9:30 a.m. Join Wild Bird & Garden's Jill Peleuses and Airlie Gardens environmental educators for a bird hike. Admission: $3–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or airliegardens.org.

6/10 Public Education Program
7–8:30 p.m. "How Clean Are Our Tidal Creeks: A Tidal Creek Report Card." Water equality expert at UNCW's Center for Marine Science, Mike Mallin, Ph.D., will discuss the condition of our waterways and what we can do to improve them. Suggested donation: $10. Coastal Education Center, 309 West Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: www.nccoast.org.

6/10–14 Live Theater
8 p.m. (Wednesday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Opera House Theatre Company presents *Mary Poppins* (musical). Also runs 6/19–21 and 6/26–28. Admission: $31. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

6/10 & 24 Black River Nature Cruise
9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. Cruise the Black River with coastal ecologist and author Andy Woods. Pre-paid tickets required. Admission: $49.50. Cape Fear Riverboats, 101 South Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-1611 or cfrboats.com.

6/11 Jazz at the Mansion
6:30–8:30 p.m. Stardust performs on the lawn. Beer and wine cash bar available. Admission: $12. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

6/11 Bridge to Bridge Run
7 p.m. A four-mile run from the Isabel Holmes Bridge to the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. Admission: $20–30. Proceeds support student scholarships at CFCC. Schwartz Center, 601 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: its-go-time.com/newbridge-bank-bridge-to-bridge-4-0.

6/11–14 Independent Film Festival
7 p.m. (Thursday & Friday); 1 p.m. (Saturday). Spring independent film festival highlighting North Carolina filmmakers and their works. Screening locations include the Browncoat Theatre, Hannah Block Community Arts Center and TheatreNOW. Info: www.cfifn.org.

6/11–28 Live Theater
7:30 p.m. Thalian Association presents *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*, the story of one of Billie Holiday's final performances in a dive bar in 1959. Admission: $25. Red Barn Studio Theatre, 1122 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-1788 or www.thalian.org/redbarn.

6/12 Compost Workshop
8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Composting workshop with hands-on demos and materials to take home. Admission: $10. New Hanover County Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7677 or www.arboretum.nhcgov.com.

6/12 Pleasure Island Concert
6:30–8:30 p.m. Rivermist (80's tribute band) kicks off Pleasure Island's summer concert series. Free. Fort Fisher Recreation Area, 118 Riverfront Road, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

6/13 Golf Tournament
10 a.m. Future generations golf tournament and fundraiser. Includes breakfast, social hour, auction and dinner. Prizes awarded to winning teams, longest drives and closest to pins. Admission: $150/player; $600/team. Proceeds benefit The First Tee of the Cape Fear Region. Porter's Neck Country Club, 8403 Vintage Club Circle, Wilmington. Info: www.thefirstteecapefearregion.org.

6/13 Battleship 101
10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Volunteers stationed throughout the WWII ship engage visitors in the areas of gunnery, radar, sickbay, galley and engineering. Admission: $6–12. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

6/13 CAM Workshop
12–4 p.m. "Experimental Digital Printing Processes #2: Transfers." Instructor Kristen Crouch leads a workshop on digital printing transfers using an Epson Professional printer and DASS transfer film. Bring your own high resolution digital images to print. Admission: $60–70. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

6/13 Summer Waves Concert
6–9 p.m. Wilmington Big Band kicks off the Brunswick Forest's Summer Waves Concert Series. Free. Annsdale Park, Brunswick Forest, 1007 Evangeline Drive, Leland. Info: (910) 371-2434 or www.brunswickforest.com.

6/14 Flag Day
10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Celebrate Flag Day at the Battleship and raise your own American flag up the ship's halyards with help from members of the American Legion Post 10 Honor Guard. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5807 or www.battleshipnc.com.

6/15–19 French Camp
9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Children (ages 4–9) will learn and practice French through games, dance, music, sports, arts and crafts, and outdoor activities. Admission: $115–150. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.playwilmington.org.

6/16 Lecture
6:30 p.m. "Alice in Wonderland Revisited." Celebrate the 150th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's classic with a lecture by Dr. Joseph Ward. Free. Northeast Regional Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6372 or www.nhclibrary.org.

6/17 Southport Bird Walk
8:30–9:30 a.m. Join Wild Bird & Garden for

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a scenic bird walk around Southport's historic district. Free. Wild Bird & Garden, 105 East Brown Street, Southport. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

6/17 Lunch & Learn
2 p.m. In honor of National Migraine and Headache Awareness Month, learn how to avoid headaches without medication, the five factors to health, and the solution to 90 percent of all headaches. Lunch included. Free. Brightmore Independent Living, 2324 South Forty-First Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 350-1980 or www.brightmoreofwilmington.com.

6/18 Evening Historic Tour
6 p.m., 6:30 p.m., 7 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. Evening tours of the historic Latimer House featuring costumed guides. Admission: $10. Latimer House, 126 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-0492 or www.hslcf.org.

6/18 Sounds of Summer
6:30–8 p.m. The Machine Gun Band (classic, rock and modern hits) kicks off the "Sounds of Summer" concert series. Free. Wrightsville Beach Park, 1 Bob Sawyer Drive, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-7925 or www.townofwrightsvillebeach.com.

6/19 Paint–n–Pour
4–6 p.m. Join artist Kathleen McLeod for a step-by-step art class. Art supplies provided, bring your own beverage. No painting experience necessary. Admission: $35. Wild Bird & Garden, 105 East Brown Street, Southport. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

6/19 Airlie Concert
6–8 p.m. BLP performs dance hits on the lawn. Food and wine available for purchase. Admission: $2–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

6/19 WARM Gala & Auction
7 p.m. Join the Wilmington Area Rebuilding Ministry (WARM) for an evening of dinner, drinks, dancing, live music, and live and silent auctions. Island wear encouraged. Admission: $75. Proceeds benefit WARM. Terraces at Sir Tyler, 1826 Sir Tyler Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-7563 or www.warmraisetheroof.org.

6/19 & 20 Battleship Program
9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Celebrate ships named *North Carolina* and enjoy a major display of Civil War, WWII and submarine arms, clothing and equipment from costumed collectors and submarine veterans. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5807 or www.battleshipnc.com.

6/19 & 20 NC Blueberry Festival
11 a.m. – 10 p.m. (Friday); 7 a.m. – 10 p.m. (Saturday). Annual festival celebrating the cultivation of blueberries in the southeast. Includes BBQ cook-off, recipe contest, car show, antique show and appraisal fair, model train show, arts and crafts, food vendors, and live musical entertainment. Courthouse Square, 100 South Wright Street, Burgaw. Info: (910) 259-2007 or www.ncblueberryfestival.com.

6/19–21 Seaglass Salvage Market
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 12–5 p.m. (Sunday). Indoor/outdoor market featuring up-cycled and repurposed furniture, home décor and accessories, garden and yard décor, jewelry, chocolates, salvage art, mid-century modern pieces and industrial salvage items for DIY projects. Location: 1987 Andrew Jackson Highway, Leland. Info: www.seaglassmarket.com.

6/20 Live Music
9 a.m. Multi-instrumentalist and pop artist Grant Short. Juggling Gypsy Cafe, 1612 Castle Street, Wilmington. Info: www.jugglinggypsy.com.

6/20 Southport Bicycle Tour
9 a.m. Slow-paced bicycle tour through historical Southport. Pre-registration required. Admission: $20–28. The Adventure Company, 807 A Howe Street, Southport. Info: (910) 454-0607 or www.theadventurecompany.net.

6/20 Kids' Music Fest
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Kid-friendly entertainment by the sea includes a summer reading kick-off, rap club album release party, rock star makeovers and temporary tattoos, free comic books, bubble mania, snow machine madness, the Kure Beach fire truck, and activities with the Children's Museum and Fort Fisher Aquarium. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

6/20 Historic Cemetery Tour
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Historical walking tour of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery lead by local historian Kenneth Newland. Admission: $10. Oakdale Cemetery, 520 North Fifteenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-5682 or www.oakdalecemetery.org.

6/20 Stormfest
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Explore the science of weather with the National Weather Service, local broadcast meteorologists, and community safety experts. Includes hands-on experiments and DIY weather tools you can use at home. Free. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4386 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

6/20 Army Reserve Band Concert
7–9 p.m. The 208th Army Reserve Band will perform a free concert. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

6/21 Boogie in the Park
5–7 p.m. Port City Shakedown (Motown, rock and dance). Bring blankets and snacks. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

6/22 & 23 Youth Nature Program
10–11 a.m. Nature program for children ages 2–5. Theme: Beautiful Butterflies. Admission: $3. Halyburton Park, 4099 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-0075 or www.halyburtonpark.com.

6/22–26 Superhero Camp
9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Fight crime and tap into your own super powers. Admission: $115–150. Children's Museum, 116 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 254-3534 or www.

playwilmington.org.

6/22–30 Farm Summer Camp
8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Monday – Wednesday). Children ages 5–13 can learn about organic farming with activities including egg collection, goat milking, pony grooming, soap making, canning, baking, vegetable picking, meal preparation, pony rides and llama cart rides. Greenlands Farm, 668 Midway Road Southeast, Bolivia. Info: (910) 253-7934 or www.greenlandsfarmstore.info.

6/25 Sounds of Summer
6:30–8 p.m. Blivet (electric rock and pop). Free. Wrightsville Beach Park, 1 Bob Sawyer Drive, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-7925 or www.townofwrightsvillebeach.com.

6/26 Southport Chirp
9–10 a.m. Informal gathering of bird and birding enthusiasts. Bring questions, sightings and stories to share. Free. Wild Bird & Garden, 105 East Brown Street, Southport. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

6/26 Gallery Walk
6–9 p.m. Downtown galleries, studios and art spaces open their doors to the public in an after-hours celebration of art and culture. Info: (910) 343-0998 or www.artscouncilofwilmington.org.

6/26 Closing Reception
6–9 p.m. Closing reception for the Coastal Carolina Clay Guild exhibition of hand-built sculpture, wheel thrown and utilitarian pottery. Refreshments provided. Free. Wilma W. Daniels Gallery, CFCC, 200 Hanover Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 362-7252 or cfcc.edu/blogs/wilmagallery.

6/26 Pleasure Island Concert
6:30–8:30 p.m. Party band CoCo LoCo performs. Free. Fort Fisher Recreation Area, 118 Riverfront Road, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

6/26 & 27 Homestead Farm Dinner
5–8:30 p.m. Five-course gourmet dinner paired with wine. Includes farm tour. Greenlands Farm, 668 Midway Road SE, Bolivia. Info: (910) 253.7934 or www.greenlandsfarmstore.info/homesteaddinners.

6/26–28 Writers Conference
12–7 p.m. (Friday); 8 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. (Saturday); 8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Sunday). Three days of workshops, discussions and readings featuring acclaimed writers Wiley Cash, Richard Krawiec and Emily Smith. Admission: $320–400. Kenan Hall, UNCW, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3000 or uncw.edu/summerwriters/index.html.

6/27 Freedom Run
8 a.m. 5K run in association with Southport's 4th of July Festival. Admission: $30. Southport Waterfont, Yacht Basin Drive, Southport. Info: (910) 457-6964 or www.nc4thofjuly.com.

6/27 Writers' Retreat
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Award-winning writer Christine Moughamian teams up with local authors Daniel Norris, John Hirchak, and songwriter Jim Downer for "What's Your Story!", a one-day beach retreat featuring interactive workshops and writing activities on the beach. Writers of all levels and genres welcome. Includes lunch with presenters and an informative panel on writing craft and publishing. Write and read your best lines in a supportive environment and take a chance to win a basketful of writerly goodies. Courtyard Marriott Hotel, Cape Lookout Room, Carolina Beach. Info: www.meetup.com/writers-618/events/222053910.

6/27 Budding & Blooming Art Show
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Forty young artists get a chance to sell their crafts at their own prices alongside twenty seasoned artists. Includes live music, raffles and more. Free admission. UNCW Warwick Center, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-7098 or www.wilmingtonart.org.

6/27 & 28 Patriotic Concert
7:30 p.m. (Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). The Sea Notes Choral Society performs "A Salute to America, We the People," a patriotic concert under the direction of Dianne Hoffman with accompanist Susan Linton. Odell Williamson Auditorium, Brunswick Community College, 50 College Road NE, Wilmington. Info: (910) 363-4183 or www.sea-notes.com.

6/28 Sacred Harp Singers
1:30 p.m. (beginners); 2–4 p.m. (group). Join Wilmington Sacred Harp Singers in performing a dynamic form of a cappella social singing dating back to Colonial America. Free. Weyerhaeuser Reception Hall, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

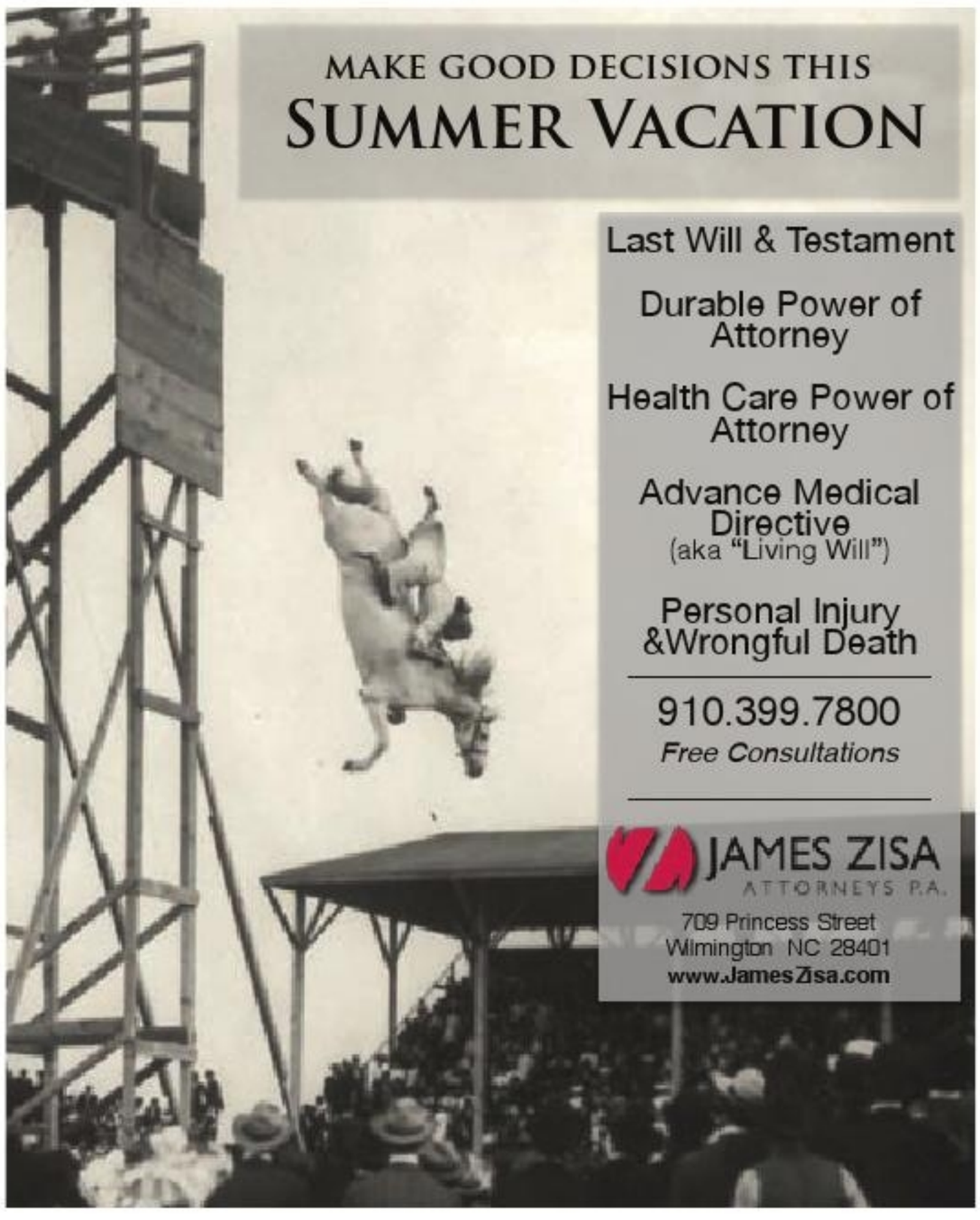
Monday Sunrise Ocean Flow Yoga
7:30–8:30 a.m. Sand, sun and sea unite in an all-levels oceanfront yoga class with instructor Tamara Cairns. Yoga mat provided. Runs through 8/24. Admission: $10. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

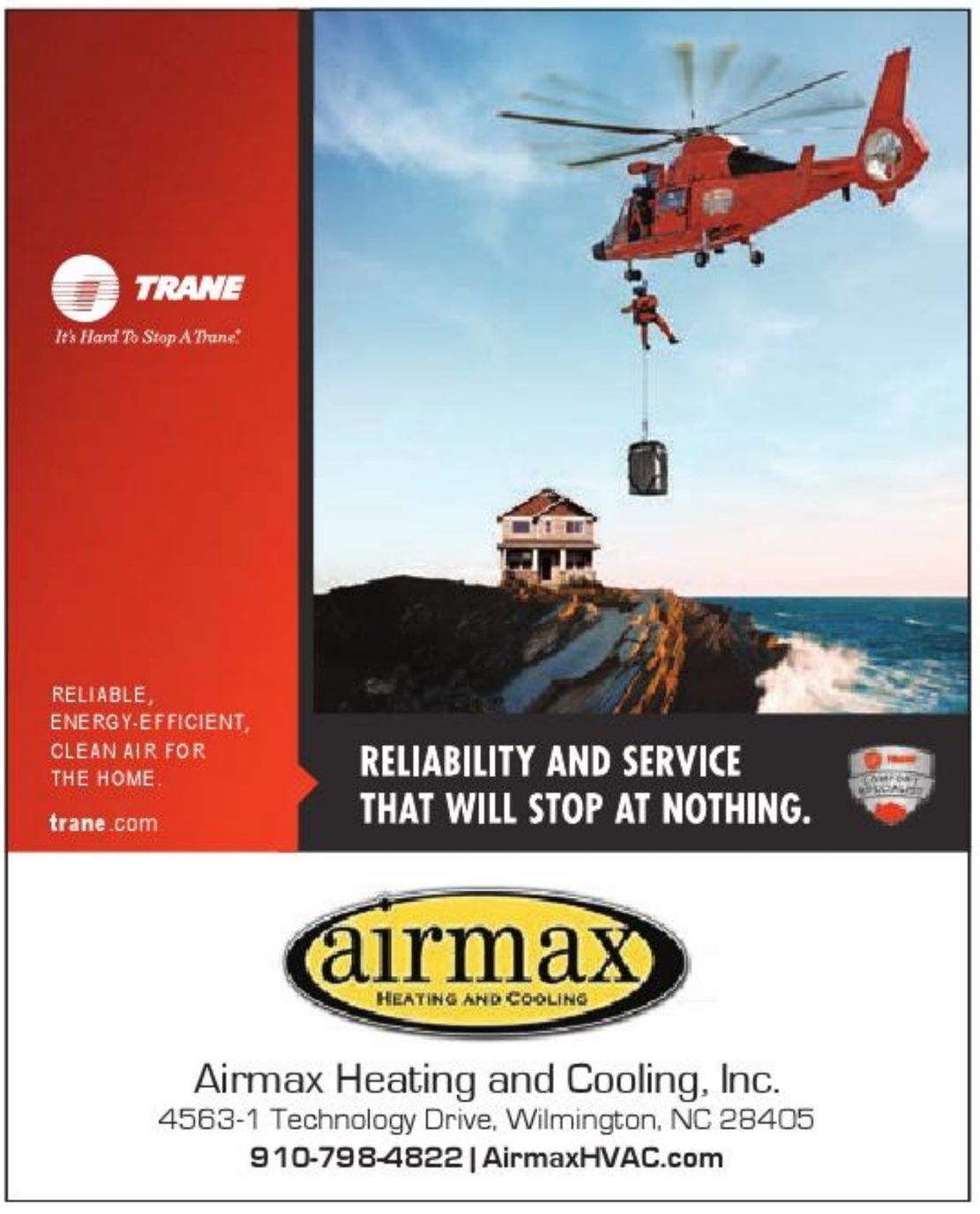
Monday Wrightsville Beach Farmers' Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside beach market offering fresh, locally grown produce, baked goods, plants and unique arts and crafts. Municipal Grounds, Seawater Lane, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-7925 or www.townofwrightsvillebeach.com.

Monday Bird Walk
9–11 a.m. Take a guided walk around a shorebird nesting colony with Wrightsville Beach Bird Stewards. Binoculars, sunscreen, and water recommended. Free. Wrightsville Beach Public Access 43, Jack Parker Boulevard, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 686-7527 or wbbirdsteward.blogspot.com.

Monday Up & Active!
6–7 p.m. Join Lynne and the Wave for an hour of music, games and fun on the lawn. Runs through 8/17. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

Monday Turtle Talk
7–8 p.m. Join the Pleasure Island Sea Turtle Project at the Pavilion for an engaging educational discussion about our nesting sea turtles.

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Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

Monday – Wednesday Cinematique Films
7 p.m. Independent, classic and foreign films. See website for updated listings and special screenings. Admission: $7. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info/Tickets: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

Monday – Friday Youth Summer Studio
1:30–5 p.m. Middle school students join instructor Zach Hanner in learning the basics of performance (physical, vocal and facial expression) and conceive an original concept for a short video project. Admission: $115–145. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Tuesday Kure Beach Market
8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Open-air market featuring locally grown produce and artisan crafts. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

Tuesday Wine Tasting
6–8 p.m. Free wine tasting hosted by a wine professional plus wine and small plate specials all night. The Fortunate Glass, 29 South Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-4292 or www.fortunateglasswinebar.com.

Tuesday Cape Fear Blues Jam
8 p.m. Bring your instrument and join the fun. No cover charge. The Rusty Nail, 1310 South Fifth Avenue. Info: (910) 251-1888 or www.capefearblues.org.

Tuesday & WednesdaySummer Movie
10 a.m. Family-friendly summer movie series hosted by Regal Cinema. 6/16 & 17: Nut Job & Annie ; 6/23 & 24: *Earth to Echo* & *The Boxtrolls*; 6/30 & 7/1: *Paddington* & *Turbo*. Admission: $1. Regal Cinema at Mayfaire, 900 Town Center Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-1857 or www.regmovies.com/movies/summer-movie-express.

Wednesday Poplar Grove Farmers' Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Open-air market on the lawn offers fresh produce, landscaping and bedding plants, herbs, baked goods and the best in handmade art and craft items. Family Day is 6/24. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org/farmers-market.

Wednesday Story Time by the Sea
10–11:30 a.m. Join Fairytales and Dreams by the Sea for stories, crafts and games. Come dressed as your favorite character and take photos with the princesses. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

Wednesday T'ai Chi at CAM
12–1 p.m. Qigong (Practicing the Breath of Life) with Martha Gregory. Open to beginner and experienced participants. Members: $5. Non-members: $8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Wednesday Meditation
6:15–7:15 p.m. Energy clearing meditation led by Energy Healer Jennifer Chapis. 6/3: Open-mindedness; 6/10: Consciousness; 6/17: Balance; 6/24: Emptiness & Fullness. Suggested donation: $15. McKay Healing Arts, 4916 Wrightsville Avenue, Wilmington. Info: www.alllovehealing.com.

Wednesday Hoop Dance Jam
7–9 p.m. Hula-hoop and dance to some great tunes. No experience necessary. Admission: $3 (drop in fee); $35 (hoop). Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

Thursday Yoga at the CAM
12–1 p.m. Open to beginner and experienced participants. Members: $5. Non-members: $8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Thursday Boardwalk Blast Music
6:30–9:30 p.m. Family-friendly concerts at the boardwalk with sunset fireworks display. 6/4: TJ Jones & Pimlico Sound Machine (Motown & dance); 6/11: Lynne and the Wave (contemporary mix); 6/18: Junkyard Mama (classic & modern country); 6/25: Bakkwoods (country). Free. Carolina Beach Boardwalk, Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

Friday Music on the Town
6:30–9:30 p.m. Local bands every Friday evening through August 7. 6/5: Uncle Harry (Rock & Soul Revue); 6/12: The Beachbilly Brothers (Beachbilly Variety); 6/19: The Phantom Playboys (Swing, Rockabilly, Rock-n-Roll); 6/26: EastBound (Country). Mayfaire Town Center, 6835 Conservation Way, Wilmington. Info: www.mayfairetown.com/events/concert-series.

Saturday Riverfront Farmers' Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside market featuring local farmers, producers, artists, crafters and live music along the banks of the Cape Fear River. Riverfront Park, North Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-6223 or www.wilmingtondowtown.com/events/farmers-market.

Saturday Port City Playwrights
11 a.m. A guild of local playwrights and screenwriters that supports writers in all levels of development. McAlister's Deli, 740 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: portcityplaywright.wix.com/pcpp.

Sunday Bluewater Waterfront Music
4–7 p.m. Summer concerts on the waterfront patio. 6/7: Velcro (1980's tribute); 6/14: Key Lime Pie (R&B, Motown & blues); 6/21: Selah Dubb (reggae); 6/28: Mark Roberts (Motown & classic rock). Bluewater Waterfront Grill, 4 Marina Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-8500 or www.bluewaterdining.com.

Sunday Movies at the Lake
8:45 p.m. Family-friendly outdoor movie screening. Popcorn, soda and candy available for purchase. 6/7: *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*; 6/14: *Paddington*; 6/21: *Annie*; 6/28: *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. Free. Carolina Beach Lake Park, Highway 421 and Atlanta Avenue, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

To add a calendar event, please contact Ashley at ashley@saltmagazinenc.com. Events must be submitted the first of the month, one month prior to the event.

Salt MAGAZINE

Index of Advertisers • June 2015

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72	Airlie Gardens	8	Island Passage
68	Airmax Heating and Cooling	68	James Zisa Attorneys, P.A.
7	Alexander Koonce, Intracoastal Realty	70	Jonkheer Jewelry
61	Artful Living Group	34	Kelly's Cabinets & Repair Co.
62	Arts Council Of Wilmington	71	Lovey's Natural Foods & Cafe
66	Atlantic Legal Services	8	Lou's Flower World & Vintage Market
67	Atlantic Spa & Billiards	30	Luna | Ad
5	Bald Head Island Limited	18	Marshall, Williams & Gorham, LLP
61	Bellamy Mansion	28	Mary Lynn King, DDS
25	Bermuda Village	71	Milner's Cafe & Catering
24	Blockade Runner Beach Resort	6	New Hanover Regional Medical Center
33	Bloke	28	Nest Fine Gifts and Interiors
32	Bobby Brandon, Intracoastal Realty	38	North Carolina Museum of History
62	Brightmore of Wilmington	78	Occasions . . . Just Write
78	Bring It! Downtown	21	Opulence of Southern Pines
34	Brushin Up, LLC	71	Our Crêpes & More . . .
42	Brunswick County Health Department	33	Palm Garden
14	Brunswick Forest	3	Paysage Home
80, IBC	Buzzy Northen Team, Intracoastal Realty	26	Pier House Group, The
62	Cameron Art Museum	22	PMG Research of Wilmington
20	Carolina Arthritis	16	Port City Java
30	Chatlee Marine	66	Precious Gems & Jewelry
41	Children's Museum of Wilmington	61	Quarter Moon Books, Gifts & Wine Bar
33	Coastal Urge	29	R.A. Jeffreys Distributing Company, LLC
8	CoolSweats	40	Re-Bath of Wilmington
10	Craige & Fox, PLLC	IFC	REEDS Jewelers
10	Davis Community, The	71	Roko Italian Cuisine
67	Dog Pros to Go	22	Summit Plastic Surgery & Dermatology
66	Galligan Chiropractic	72	Taste the Olive Market & Cafe
34	Glass Guru, The	42	Thalian Hall Center for the Performing Arts, Inc.
11	Glen Meade Center for Women's Health	78	Tin & Oak
18	Glo Medspa	67	Transplanted Garden, The
78	Golden Gallery, The	2	UNC Greensboro, M.A. Liberal Studies
33	Great Outdoor Provision Co.	25	Uptown Market
72	Eclipse at Blue Moon	1	Vance Young, Intracoastal Realty
42	Encore! Consignment Boutique	36	VanDavis Aveda
36	En Vie Interiors	36	Verde Painting
34	Fasse Bldgs.	26	Well•Spring
BC	Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery	60	Wilmington Art Association
70	Fibrenew	36	Wilmington Blind, Shutter & Closet Company
29	First South Bank		
8	Fisherman's Wife, The		
61	Fourth Friday Gallery Nights		
21	Hubbard Kitchen, Bath & Lighting Showroom		

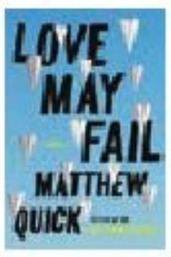
N.C. Writer's Notebook

By Sandra Redding

Wine and cheese are ageless companions, like aspirin and aches, or June and moon, or good people and noble ventures. – M. F. K. Fisher

Literary Events

June 18–21 (Thursday–Sunday). 2015 Jane Austen Summer Program, UNC-Chapel Hill. Have a passion for all things Austen? A symposium in celebration of *Emma*, published 200 years ago, spells romance. Info: janeaustensummer.org.



June 23 (Tuesday, Time TBA). The Country Bookshop, Southern Pines. Michael Quick of N.C.'s Outer Banks will speak, answer questions and sign his 2015 novel, *Love May Fail*. The adaptation of his first novel, *The Silver Linings Playbook*, won the 2013 Oscar for Best Motion Picture. Info: thecountrybookshop.biz.

June 26–28 (Friday through Sunday). Summer Writers Conference 2015, University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Enjoy an MFA experience at the beach. Dedicated university writers plus the esteemed Wiley Cash and Richard Krawiec will facilitate workshops, roundtable discussions, readings and book signings. Info and registration: uncw.edu/summerwriters/index.html.

July 23–26 (Thursday through Sunday). East Carolina University, Greenville. The 2015 NCWN Squire Summer Writing Residency features workshops in poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction. Includes panel discussions, faculty readings and open mic. Info: ncwriters.org.

Congratulations

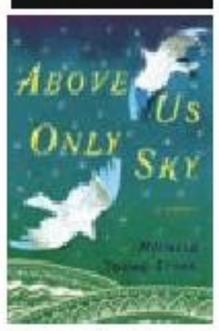
Hurrah! Guilford County finally has a regional NCWN representative. On April 11, award-winning copywriter Faun Finley held a Meet & Greet, Write & Bite kickoff event at Scuppernong Books in Greensboro. Regional reps host free monthly events welcoming writers at all levels of skills and experience. Contact her at: faun.finley@gmail.com.

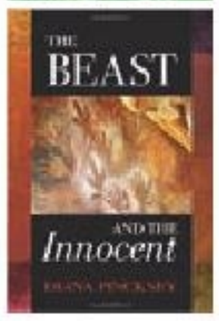
Mebane poet Jaki Shelton Green, who celebrates a birthday this month, is back on top. Though she went through rough times – the death of her daughter, a personal illness and writer's block – she's writing again and winning honors. Her keynote address at the 2015 NCWN Spring Conference charmed attendees. Praising the beauty of diversity, she illustrated how sharing our poems and stories with one another creates community.

The Burlington Writers Club announced the 2015 first place winners: High School Poetry, R. J. St. Arnold; High School Fiction, Susanna Fox; Middle-School Poetry, Mallory Jones; Middle-School Fiction; Cassandra Sigmon; Elementary Poetry, Annalise Harter; Elementary Fiction: Lucy Hawkins.

Praise to all winners of the 2015 N. C. State University Poetry Contest judged by Gibbons Ruark. First Place: Mary Hennessay of Raleigh; first place undergraduate prize winner, Darren Lipman of Asheboro.

Mesha Maren of West Virginia won the prestigious 2015 Thomas Wolfe Fiction Prize ($1,000).





New book releases include: *Blue Yodel*, a captivating book of poems by Greensboro Poet Ansel Elkins, winner of the 2014 Yale Series of Young Poets Award . . . *The Beast and The Innocent*, the fifth anthology of poetry by Diana Pinckney, prize-winning writer of Charlotte . . . *Above Us Only Sky*, a young adult release by Outer Banks writer Michele Young-Stone, which chronicles the curious behavior of a young woman who has her wings removed (*frankly, if I had wings I'd keep them*) . . . *Refund*, the collection of short stories by Wilmington writer Karen E. Bender, which was selected *New York Times Book Review* "Editor's Choice" in March . . . *Six Notable Women of North Carolina* – spotlighting the remarkable lives of Kathy Reichs, Jennifer Pharr Davis, Sharon Decker, Anne Pender, Kathryn Stripling Byer and Millie Ravenel – is the latest book by Jack J. Prather, founder of the Young Writers Scholarship at Warren Wilson College.

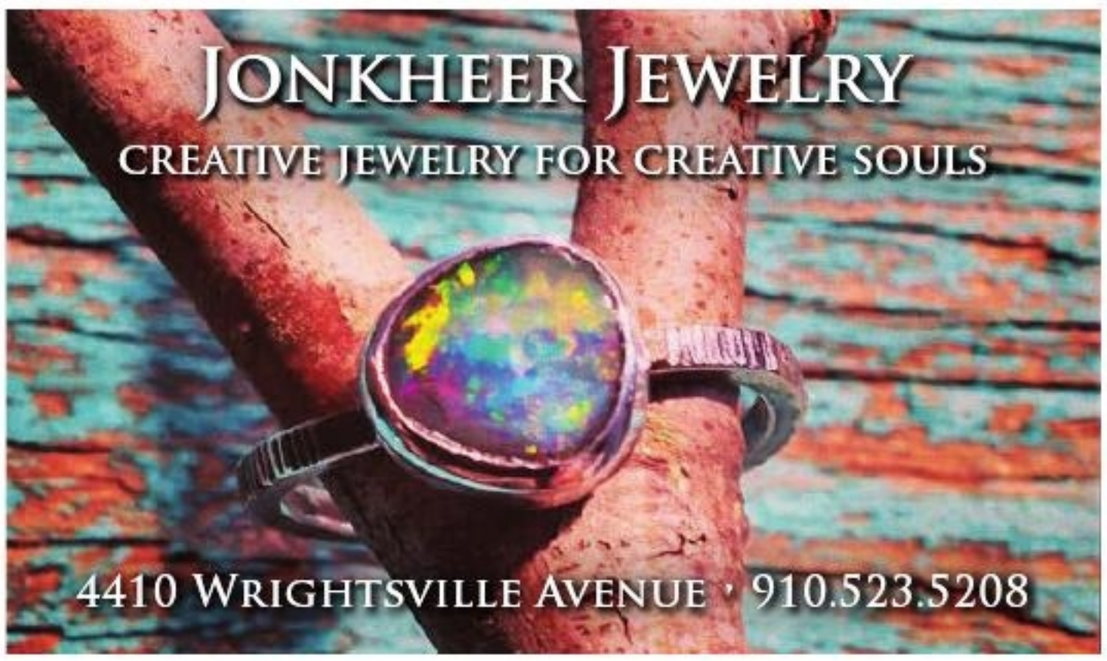
Lesson

I believe that the only lastingly important form of writing is writing for children. It is writing that is carried in a reader's heart for a lifetime; it is writing that speaks to the future.
– Sonya Hartnett

Fueled by the *Harry Potter* series, the juvenile fiction, aka young adult (YA) category, is booming. Twenty-seven N.C. authors appear on the American Library Association Young Adult Library Services list, including Cindy Cipriano of Greensboro, Sarah Dessen of Chapel Hill and David Macinnis Gill of Wilmington. During my last trip to the Greensboro Library, I picked up two YA books to check out. Deciding to add something more mature, I asked a librarian where books for more mature readers were located. She led me to the LARGE PRINT section.

Please let me know about literary happenings in your community.

Greensboro writer Sandra Redding's novel, Naomi Wise: A Cautionary Tale, *is a riveting story about heartbreak and hope in a Quaker community.*



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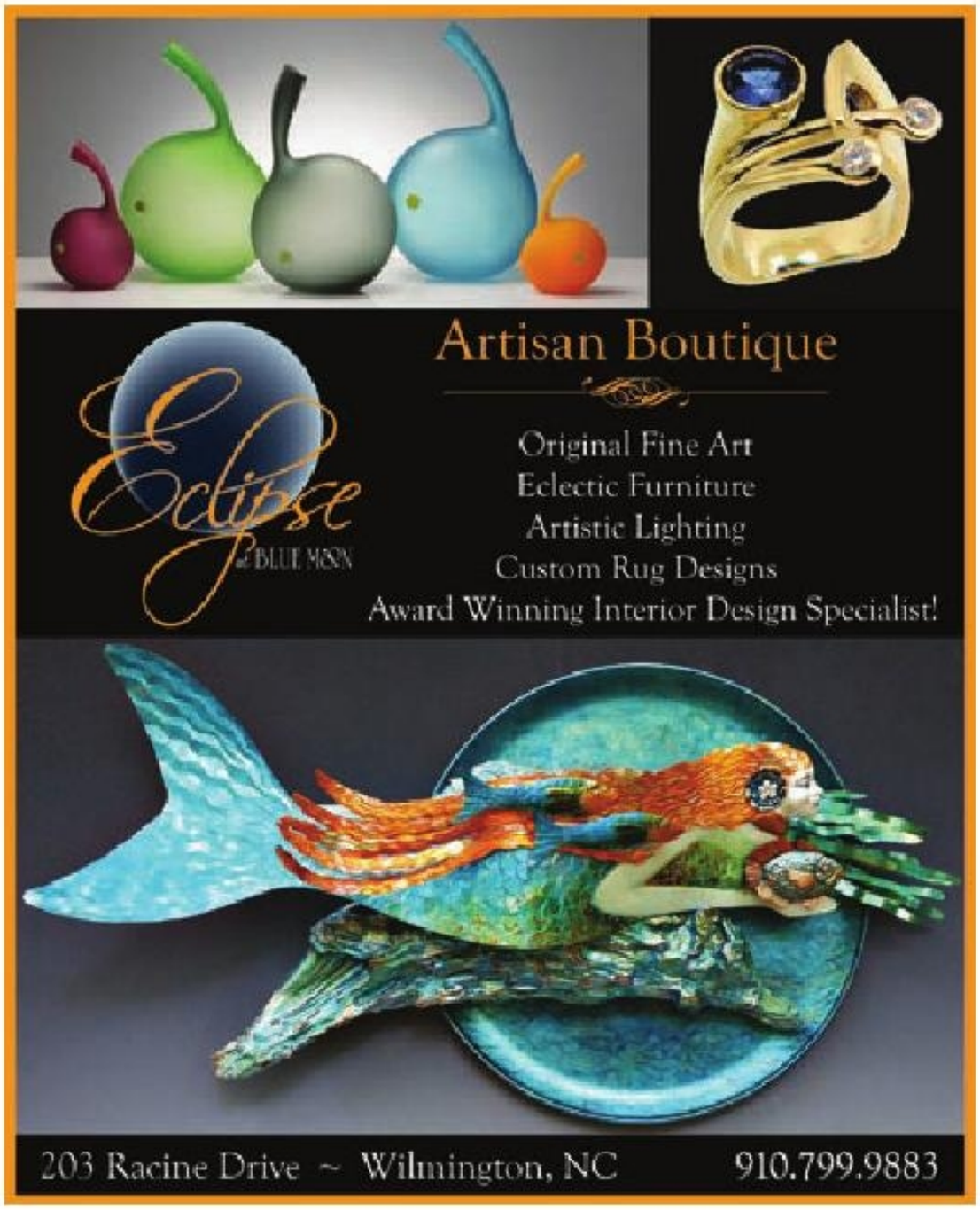
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Port City People

Wilmington Art Association's Spring Art Show & Sale, Opening Reception

Thursday, April 9, 2015

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

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Lana Stanley and Chris Bloom

Lawrence Dixon, Samantha Herrick

Sophie Whisnant, Janet B. Sessons, Sarah Honning, Gayle Smith, Alexie Bazinet, Kristine Kesling

Anita Jacques

Elaine Cooper

Karen Crenshaw

Leping Beck, Dan Beck, Janet B. Sessons

Liz Hosier, Priscilla Judy, Gretchen Murden

Barbara Salisbury

Port City People

23rd Annual Fashion Show and Auction

Hosted by Domestic Violence Shelter and Services
Friday, April 17, 2015
Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Betty & Nick Rhodes

Eileen Stammeth, Patrick Welker, Matthew Blum, Arlene Reyes

Helen Sidberry, Robert Clayton

John Evans

Jennifer Presnell, Mary Ann Lama, Lauren Daley

Emma Saunders, Jon Kapell

Carolyn Strickland and Gladys Vasile

Rebecca Martin, Victoria Hunter, Elizabeth Sorace

Sandi Belmonte

Asia Davis

Volanda Sparrow

Abagail Barman

Port City People

Thalian Hall's Legacy Dinner

Saturday, April 18, 2015

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

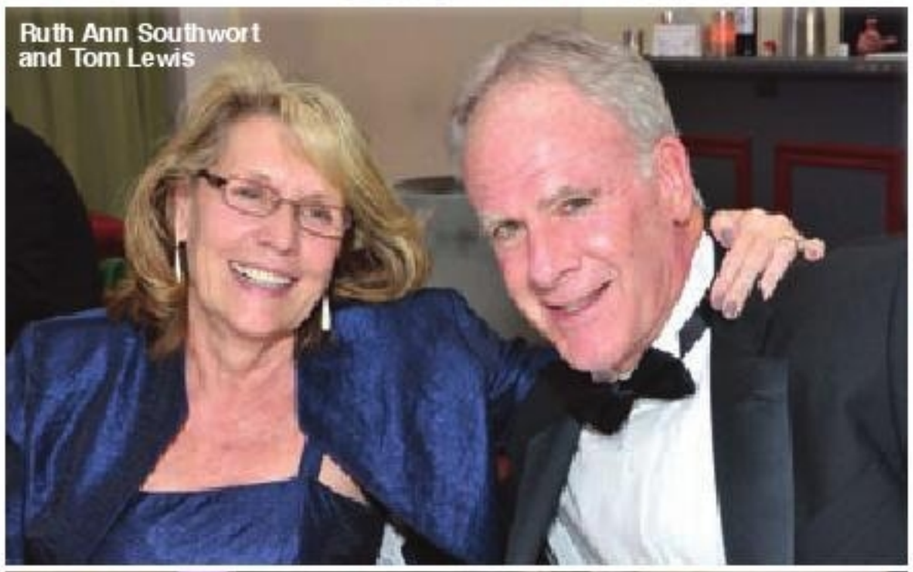
Abby Myles and Harrison Sasser

John & Lauren Gardner

Iain Orr and Ada Lee

Wayne Gay and Bri McWhiter

Abigail & Patrick Spach


Ruth Ann Southwort and Tom Lewis

Beth & Walter Pancoe

Sam and Amanda Lee

Angela Rowe, Tony Rivenbark, Jayne Bednarczyk

Stacy Ankrum, Kurt & Shannon Sandlin

Linda & Steve Smits

Dr. Donald MacQueen, Dr. Lee Whitehurst, Herbert Zimmer, Lynn MacQueen, Ann Whitehurst, Ronna Zimmer, Roberta Zimmer

Lisa & Gabriel Rich

Port City People

50th Anniversary of Vietnam War

Coastline Convention Center

Saturday, April 25, 2015

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Brenda & David Johnson

Rusty Spear, Norm Melton

Elizabeth Daniels, Duane Howlett

Pastor Gary Godwin, Teri Godwin, Brinson Hynan

Carolyn & Mike Wilson

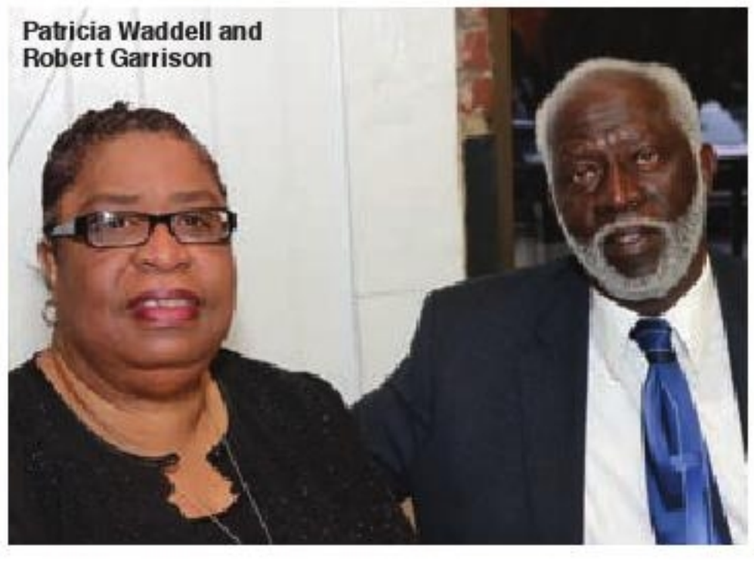
John Tullous and Sondra North

Barbara & John Irving

Brad & Dolly Fisher, Nick & Jessica Cosmano

Nancy & Chuck Taverna

William & Yvonne Sideberry


Patricia Waddell and Robert Garrison

Troy Weaver and Kara J'Anthony

Here it Comes, My June Bugs

Look up, live well

By Astrid Stellanova

June comes sashaying onto the calendar like something too good to be true. Like icing on an astral cake — sweet, smooth. If you don't like June in the South, well, you just ain't got your mind right. June suits me best; this is flip-flops, cut-offs and T-shirt's prime time in the Cosmos. Now to deliver an Astrid-turf straight talk in response to some of my faithful readers. More than anything else, remember this: Get your happy on, children!

Gemini (May 21—June 20)
Somebody whose opinion matters a whale of a lot hurt your feelings. You feel so flattened and low about now you could climb up on a box and see your emotions running away at least three days in the distance. Guess what? By birthday time, this whole flapdoodle won't matter one iota, and you will be looking back at sorrow in the rearview mirror, with the bluebird of happiness showing the way out of *Down*-Town. If you get a chance to share a meal, drink or cup of Joe with somebody you don't know, take it. Be generous. This is really a month about taking chances, especially second and third ones. Chin up; there will be cause for celebration and even a little jiggy dance by the 26th.

Cancer (June 21—July 22)
There is at least one astral event this month that will have reverberations for your sign, but they will be of the illuminating type. This will help shed light onto something that has bugged you and that seems stubbornly unclear. A supernova collapse in deep space has ripples here on Earth; think of it as a door opening onto the path of deeper consciousness for all Star Children. Ain't that kind of strange and marvelous?

Leo (July 23—August 22)
A letter. A forgotten Polaroid picture. A movie receipt. A snippet of old newspaper aging inside a book. You find something that winds up being a treasure, a key, the code to crack an old mystery, long forgotten and long abandoned. Honey, put on your thinking cap. Use this little piece of information and read it like the real treasure that it is, like a cosmic message in a bottle. Sit with it; search out the hidden meaning and play detective. Something with real fabulosity is sneaking up right behind you.

Virgo (August 23—September 22)
It takes a lot to keep you from derailing, just because you get so caught up in somebody else's drama. Life ain't about borrowing meaning; it's about making some of what is at the center of your own drama. Take yourself for a walk and a talk. Here is another little secret: Every single player in your story is there for a reason. But don't think their mystery matters one little bit more than the one you are living.

Libra (September 23—October 22)
June can be slick as a wet road, and from the Juneteenth on, you will find yourself having to explain things that you thought were plain as day. You get frustrated. It shows. Shake it off, Sugar, like you are starring in a Taylor Swift song. Everybody ain't born as smart as you were. By the end of this cycle you will get a break and a vacation that will make you forget the aggravation (and that is really all it was, you know).

Scorpio (October 23—November 21)
You love shiny and sparkly things more than Rain Man, and it may be because you need the reflected light when your heart sinks lower than whale manure (over the truly dangdest things). If you can lift your eyeballs up to the horizon, you will read the nice message written plain as day in the night sky. Know this, Sugar: You have been lucky to be well loved. Even adored.

Sagittarius (November 22—December 21)
You are nectar to the bees, like somebody a friend dated once. (Her name, so help me Hannah, was Smoky Bacon. Unforgettable. But it turned out she was too much smoke and not enough bacon.) Now I ask you, have you capitalized upon this nectar-like appeal? Are you using the gifts you were given and can you just *own* them? You don't have to be catty to dominate the catwalk, Darlin'.

Capricorn (December 22—January 19)
Well, here we go again. You had your chance, and you knew it — but still, well, you blew it. Given you are one lucky Star Child this month, it appears you get that chance circling back again. Stand still. Get your rope ready. Lasso that star and bring it on home. I ain't going to say this again: Not everybody gets a chance to catch a comet. But *you* do.

Aquarius (January 20—February 18)
By the time you finish chewing that grass-fed beef burger, you already started thinking you ought to learn to make your own pasta. And then, by George, you do. There ain't much of anything you cannot do, zany genius, except . . . realize it. A lot of people depend upon your can-do power to just keep on keeping on . . . your candle power is that great. Shine on, Baby.

Pisces (February 19—March 20)
There is one person in your life whom you can go to no matter what. They have been a fixture; sometimes back in the shadows, quietly watching. Always there for you, and offering exactly what you needed, even when you didn't know what that was. They ain't asked for anything. But a bill is due. The payment will have to be remitted from here on, due the first of every month: Pay it forward. Honey, you will find the deeper reward in this, same as they did.

Aries (March 21—April 19)
In the race of life, it ain't hard to overtake the bow-legged woman at the finish line. That don't make you a hero. So let her win once in a while, Sugar. You are going to discover something about yourself that will make that easy. There is also a lost treasure retrieved this month; Astrid ain't sure if it's a thing or a person. But you will know. Whichever, or whoever, it rightly belongs to you.

Taurus (April 20—May 20)
You knew that bottled water was going to be a big hit waaaaaaay back. You knew that they weren't making any more land and so you bought the farm for next to nothing. You had a shrewd way with women, horses, babies and bankers, and you were almost always right and almost always won. Now, you are faced with one gigantic conundrum. It is going to change your entire destiny. Astrid's pulling for you, Sugar.

For years, Astrid Stellanova owned and operated Curl Up and Dye Beauty Salon in the boondocks of North Carolina until arthritic fingers and her popular astrological readings provoked a new career path.

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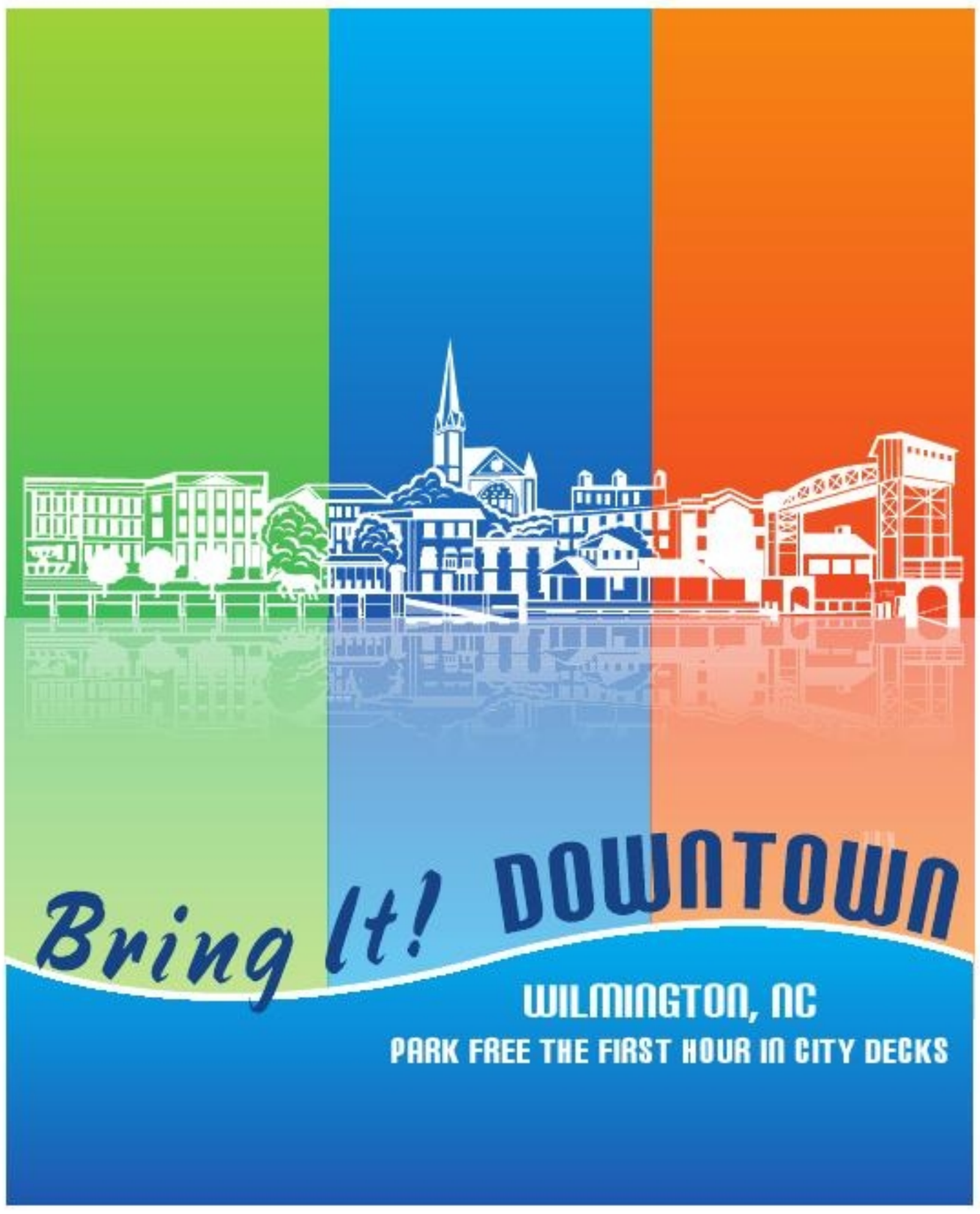

Theory of Madness

Just something to chew on – not out, please

By Clyde Edgerton

While March Madness 2015 was airing on TV I kept noticing coaches get angry, occasionally chewing out a team, or just an unlucky player who'd made a mistake.

I noticed the Notre Dame coach didn't do this. Therefore I started pulling for them after my team lost. (That tells many of you which was not my team.)

The coaches who use anger as a strategy must believe it helps win games, or else they wouldn't do it — or at least they'd be doing it less and less, as they gain control of their emotions.

What do the players of anger-strategy coaches learn — in addition to "hard work, team play, and conditioning are good"?

My guess is that some young players are learning that it's not just OK but good strategy to get angry at their own players when they become coaches, or if they become leaders in other professions, it's good strategy to yell at people they direct and teach. Or if they become parents . . . etc.

Wouldn't it be interesting (*SNL* interesting) to see a particularly smart and insightful college basketball player chew out the coach during a time-out? "Hey. Why the hell did you put us in a zone when the man-to-man was working?"

Coach looks to the floor. "I don't —"

"Don't you see how that left Turlington free to break for that lob? Get with it! Settle down. Think!"

"Sorry, Player."

It's wrong for a coach to scream into a player's face — a player who is doing all he or she can to be proficient, in a game, for crying out loud.

So this leads to a modest proposal. I propose that coaches work hard during the week — teaching fundamentals and coaching — and then at game time, let a promising student player coach the team. Think about it: The coach sits in the stands; he's done all he can during weekday practices; and now he has to be quiet and watch while one of the players (a different player-leader each game) makes decisions. Imagine what the player-leaders would learn about basketball, strategy, about psychology, leadership . . . life.

The adult coach would work with team members on the court and in the classroom — and get a professor's salary.

Speaking of coach salaries, what happens when a basketball player wants to wear New Balance shoes on the court but his college team has a contract with Nike? The contract stipulates that the player, by wearing a commercial product produced outside the university, must help sell a commercial product produced outside the university. This way, the player learns to wear what he or she is told to wear — regardless of personal preference — because the college can get a lot of moo-la that way. That Nike contract is going to help allow, for one thing, the coach (wearing Clarks) to get a salary four to fourteen times bigger than college professors who are teaching, say, psychology, or history, or something less important than college athletics.

Our universities are generally teaching our students, through adult leadership, the most important bottom line: Moo-La.

March Madness. Coach Madness. Moo-la Madness. Let the Games continue.

Clyde Edgerton is the author of ten novels, a memoir and a new work, Papadaddy's Book for New Fathers. *He is the Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing at UNCW.*

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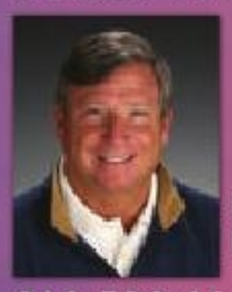

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